■ WORLD / A20

Bin Laden admits masterminding 9/11, assigning 19 terrorists

■ BUSINESS / B1

Peso nears 53 to $1, closes at 4-month low; BSP selling stops slide

■ METRO / A17

Family of four, nanny killed in fire in Quezon City

■ NEWS / A9

'Butanding' found dead with 14 bullet wounds in Masbate

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, May 25, 2006 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 166 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Killings just part of rise and fall of crime, says PNP

PARANG NATURAL LANG YAN?

By Luige A. del Puerto and Norman Bordadora

SHORT OF SAYING THAT the killings of activists and journalists cannot be stopped, a ranking police officer yesterday said that crime had its cycles of

KILLINGS/ A8

Jimenez to donate P50M to CAP, PPI plan holders

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

EMERGING FROM SECLUSION AFTER HIS RElease from a US prison, businessman Mark Jimenez has with characteristic flamboyance announced that he would help the thousands of victims of the failed pre-need companies.

Jimenez yesterday said he would donate P25 million to Pacific Plan Inc. education plan sub-

JIMENEZ/ A8

'I signed as Jose Velarde but bank account not mine'

By Nelson F. Flores

TESTIFYING AT HIS PLUNDER TRIAL, DEposed President Joseph Estrada yesterday admitted signing bank documents as "Jose Velarde," but denied that the controversial bank account was his.

His admission, a reiteration of a statement he made in a TV interview in 2002, confirmed the testimony of Equitable-PCI Bank executive Clarissa Ocampo that she was only a foot away from him when he signed the documents using the alias.

The account was said to contain P3.2 billion.

Estrada, 69, said that the bank account was owned by his friend, businessman Jaime Dichaves, and that he had reached an "internal arrangement" with Dichaves and the bank before he signed the documents.

He said this was why he was astonished when, during his 2000 Senate impeachment trial, Ocampo claimed surprise that he signed the documents as Jose Velarde.

"Perhaps she does not know our internal arrangement," he said.

Ocampo had testified at the impeachment trial that Estrada, and not Dichaves, owned the account.

She said former bank chair George Go, a friend of Estrada's, had ordered her to replace documents linking the account to Estrada with new ones showing Dichaves as the owner.

Estrada made the admission at yesterday's resumption of his testimony before the Sandiganbayan Special Division following a two-week break in the 5-year-old plunder trial.

I SIGNED/ A8

DINUKOT NA LIDER NG UMDJ ILABAS PA!

RAFFY LERMA

COMFORT AND AID: After his plunder trial at the Sandiganbayan, ex-President Joseph Estrada meets with Miriam Eustaquio, wife of the chair of the Union of the Masses for Democracy and Justice, and family members of the other Estrada leaders who were abducted last Monday. Estrada has vowed all-out support to the families of his missing supporters.

AFP admits: We seized Erap men

Ermita at first denied 'Gestapo-like' arrest

By Dona Pazzibugan, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Armand N. Nocum

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDuardo Ermita was quite emphatic. The administration had nothing to do with the disappearance of five supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada, whom their relatives had reported missing.

Two hours after Ermita made the statement yesterday, the military confirmed the government had the five in custody.

Not only that, the police had also filed rebellion charges against them for allegedly plotting to assassinate four Cabinet members—Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, Presidential Management Staff chief Michael Defensor, Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzalez.

Prosecutors said the plot involved a conspiracy between rightist elements and communist rebels. A state witness presented to media, supposedly a New People's Army member, claimed the plot also called for killing Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes and Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza.

AFP ADMITS/ A8

A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS: Mercy Ganas-Prescott, originally from the Philippines, is thrilled after being sworn in as a US citizen by California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, himself an immigrant from Austria. More than 1,100 immigrants representing 101 countries participated in the ceremony.

AP

Finally, it's official: FPJ is National Artist

By Christine O. Avendaño

AFTER THE PALACE ANNOUNCED but took back on the same day last month the National Artist awardees for the year, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday finally proclaimed the awardees. The late movie "king" and former presidential challenger Fernando Poe Jr. is an awardee along with six others.

They are Bienvenido L. Lumbera (Literature), Ramon A. Obusan (Dance), Benedicto R. Cabrera (Painting), Ildefonso P. Santos Jr. (Architecture), Ramon Valera (Fashion/posthumous) and Abdulmari Asia Imao (Sculpture).

The conferment of the awards had generated much controversy after the Palace's initial an-

FINALLY/ A4

Journalists split over issue of arming selves

By Alcuin Papa

FILIPINO JOURNALISTS ARE DIVIDED OVER the issue of arming themselves after Malacañang remarked the other day that it was amenable to it as a way of stopping the wave of killings of media practitioners in the country.

Joel Sy Egco, president of the Association of Responsible Media (ARM), yesterday said the Palace pronouncement was "most welcome."

JOURNALISTS/ A4

MELVIN GASCON/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

NUEVA VIZCAYA IS 167 YEARS OLD

Diadi town's float depicts its well-deserved title as the province's biggest producer of freshwater fish during Wednesday's founding day celebration in the capital town of Bayombong.

US Senate to lift immigration cap on nurses; RP hardest hit

AS AMERICA RUNS SHORT OF NURSES, US senators are looking abroad. They have inserted a little-noticed provision in their immigration bill that would throw open the gate and, some fear, drain nurses from the world's developing countries, particularly the Philippines.

The legislation is expected to pass this week. The Senate provision, which removes the limit on the number of nurses who can immigrate, has been largely overlooked in the emotional debate over illegal immigration.

Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.), who sponsored the proposal, said it was needed to help the United States cope with a growing nursing shortage.

Brownback said he doubted the measure would greatly increase the small number of African nurses coming to the United States, but acknowledged that it could have an impact on the Philippines and India, which have been sending thousands of nurses a year to America.

The exodus of nurses from poor to rich countries has strained health systems in the developing world, which are already facing severe shortages of their own. Many African countries have begun to demand compensation for the training and loss of nurses and other health professionals who move away.

Some rich countries have responded. Two years ago, Britain, a huge beneficiary of nurses from Malawi, pledged to give that country more than $100 million to increase the salaries of nurses and other health workers.

But the Senate provision, which would remain in force until 2014, contains no such

US SENATE/ A4

Batasan 5's best defense vs attack

By Fe Zamora

AS FAR AS THE GROUP OF PARTY-list lawmakers now known as the "Batasan 5" is concerned, an eyewitness is the best defense against an attack.

"What is more important [than armed bodyguards] is somebody who can call for help and describe the assailant," said one of the group's members, Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza.

According to another member, Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, keeping "high visibility" is his way of protecting himself.

Said Ocampo, a former journalist and political detainee, in Filipino: "I carry no debt against the people. If anything happens to me, only they (the government) will be behind it."

If any of the Batasan 5—which also includes Bayan Muna Representatives Teodoro Casiño and Joel Virador, and Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano—has a bodyguard, it is most likely a trusted friend or a family member, Maza said.

And even if she and her colleagues are allowed security from the police or the military, it will be too risky, she said: "*Mga bantay salakay yan.*"

BATASAN 5'S/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western Visayas and the whole of Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/05/24/06 SOURCE PAGASA

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2006

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

RP, US sign new antiterror pact

By Dona Pazzibugan and Nikko Dizon

THE PHILIPPINES AND THE UNITED STATES YESterday formalized a new security arrangement to bolster their battle against terrorism and other threats, according to officials from both countries.

The accord involves setting up a new joint panel called the Security Engagement Board (SEB), described in a joint statement by Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. as a "new consultative mechanism for cooperation on nontraditional security concerns," including terrorism, transnational crime, maritime safety and security, natural and man-made disasters, and pandemic outbreaks.

The SEB, cochaired by the US Pacific commander and the Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff, will develop measures to enhance cooperation between the two allies.

"The establishment of the SEB further strengthens our partnership," the statement quoted US Ambassador Kristie Kenney as saying, noting that Manila is Washington's longtime friend and major non-Nato ally.

US Embassy spokesperson Matthew Lussenhop said the creation of the SEB was a Philippine initiative and "it will provide a clearer framework for consultations and planning to address nontraditional security concerns."

Other members of the SEB from the Philippine side are the major service commanders of the AFP and representatives from the foreign and defense departments. Other board members from the US side are other major commanders of the US Pacific Command, the US Embassy chief of mission, and representatives of the US Department of Defense.

The SEB is not a new treaty as it merely implements existing bilateral treaties with the US," Romulo and Cruz said in their joint statement.

Manila and Washington signed the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty that calls for cooperation in battling external security threats in either country. The two countries have also signed a Visiting Forces Agreement that allows US forces to join large-scale military exercises in the Philippines.

Officials said the SEB would allow both nations to jointly deal with terrorism and other threats not falling under the Mutual Defense Treaty.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, one of Asia's most vocal backers of US President George W. Bush's global war on terror, has allowed US forces to train and arm Filipino soldiers battling al-Qaida-linked militants in Mindanao.

No US bases

At a news conference in Camp Aguinaldo, however, Cruz stressed the new security agreement would not allow US forces to reestablish bases in the country or to join local military operations. The Constitution foreign troops from engaging in local combat.

"That's very clear in the agreement, no American troops will engage in combat, no basing. We have to approve their every move. That's clear," Cruz said.

The bicameral Legislative Oversight Committee on the VFA shall also exercise oversight powers over the SEB.

Gilbert Asuque, spokesperson of the Department of Foreign Affairs, said Manila and Washington agreed to set up the mechanism in April when the two sides agreed to expand their partnership to address emerging security threats.

Although both Manila and Washington have justified US military presence in Mindanao as part of authorized joint military exercises, left-wing groups have questioned the legality of the presence of American troops near battle zones in Mindanao and have demanded their withdrawal.

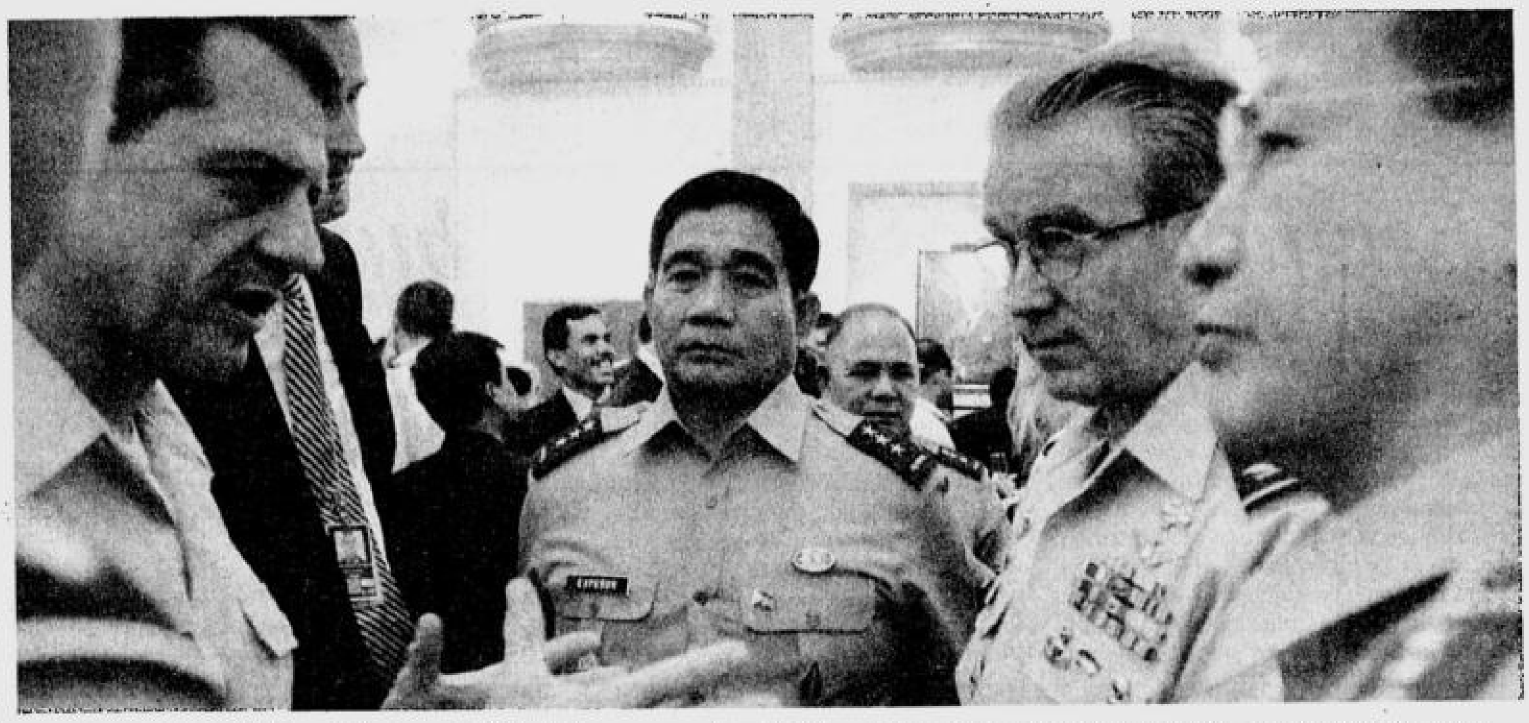
"It's a very blatant way for the US to intervene in our domestic affairs," said Renato Reyes, head of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, the largest left-wing group in the country.

"They want to broaden that intervention. And this can be used by Mrs. Arroyo to get US support to stay in power. It's very dangerous," Reyes said.

Focused responses

Cruz said the SEB "affords us the opportunity to develop focused and comprehensive responses" to security threats.

He said the SEB was an emerging model for bilateral cooperation with neighboring states in Southeast Asia to address nontraditional military concerns. *With reports by AP and AFP*



AT THE US EMBASSY (from left), Army Col. Jim Linder, commander Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines exchanges ideas with Army chief Hermogenes Esperon, Defense and Army Attache Col. Terry Cook and AFP Chief of Staff Generoso Senga during the reception honoring the visit of the hospital ship USNS Mercy to the Philippines.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Abcede told: 'Stop waltzing with Imelda'

By Philip C. Tubeza
and TJ Burgonio

AN ADMINISTRATION LAWmaker and an opposition senator yesterday scored Ricardo Abcede of the Presidential Commission on Good Government for partying with former First Lady Imelda Marcos during his birthday celebration last week.

House Deputy Majority Leader Edcel Lagman said that Abcede should have avoided Marcos since his agency was pursuing criminal cases against the Marcoses and trying to recover their allegedly ill-gotten wealth, the same reason cited by Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

"How could there be anything even remotely correct and acceptable about a Commissioner of the Presidential Commission on Good Government—the very agency tasked to recover the vast government resources illegally amassed by the Marcoses—hobnobbing with one of the primary suspects?" Lagman said in a statement.

"Commissioner Abcede should remember that, as a ranking official of the PCGG, he should not only be clean. Like Caesar's wife, he should always appear to be completely untainted. He should be above suspicion," Lagman said.

"In socializing with Imelda Marcos at his birthday party, Commissioner Abcede is like a prosecutor dancing with the accused," he added.

Meanwhile, Pimentel Jr. said he was open to the idea of the PCGG entering into a compromise with the Marcos heirs but only if it involved their civil—not criminal—liabilities, and they made a full disclosure of their wealth.

As a first condition, he said that the former first lady should divulge the real estate property, investments, bank accounts and other assets acquired by the late strongman here and abroad.

In his statement, Lagman also disputed Abcede's claim that entering into a compromise with the Marcoses on their ill-gotten wealth cases would provide closure for the victims of martial law.

'It's a fairy tale,' says Pimentel of GMA's vision

By TJ Burgonio and Michael Lim Ubac

IT'S A FAIRY TALE.

This was the reaction of Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. after President Macapagal-Arroyo announced her vision to bring Filipinos to the "Enchanted Kingdom" of First World success in the next 20 years.

"GMA reveals her Enchanted Kingdom world view, her Gotterdammerung, where she will be queen and everyone else a serf ministering to her whim! Or a clown to make her laugh," Pimentel said.

Instead of making false promises, the President should heed the people's clamor for her resignation over her abuse of power and "misdeed in office," including the killings of militants and journalists, he said.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Joel Virador said that instead of an "Enchanted Kingdom," Ms Arroyo's presence in Malacañang was bringing Filipinos "a continuing nightmare."

In Dagupan City, Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz described the President's vision of an "Enchanted Kingdom of the First World' as "more fiction-oriented than [Da Vinci Code author] Dan Brown, more nebulous than any dreamland."

In a statement posted on his blog (www.ovc.blogspot.com), Cruz said the President's "Enchanted Kingdom" is perceived to be occupied "not by real people but by illusive dwarfs." *With Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

RP, OIC set to review peace accord

THE PHILIPPINES AND THE ORganization of the Islamic Conference are to review progress on a 10-year-old peace pact that the government signed with the Moro National Liberation Front amid complaints that progress has been slow, according to a joint statement at the end of the visit here of a fact-finding mission from the Islamic body.

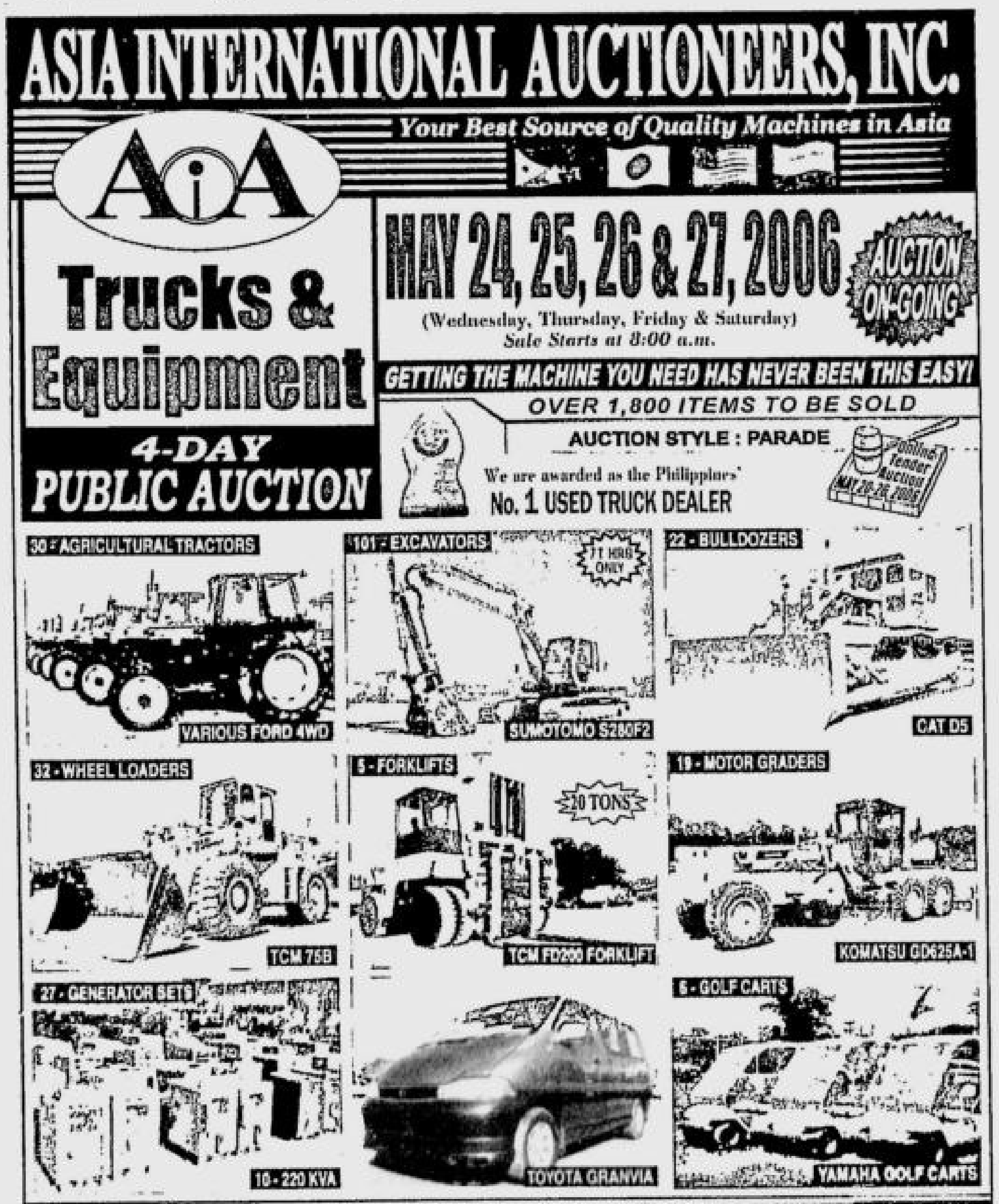
The pan-Islamic OIC brokered the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF rebels to end their fight for a separate state in Mindanao.

Dates for the meeting, which is to be held in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia and will also include rebel representatives, are being firmed up but it should be "set as soon as practicable," the statement said.

The government and the OIC will hold a "preliminary meeting" on the sidelines of an upcoming foreign ministers' meeting of Islamic nations to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan next month, the statement said.

Under the peace pact, MNLF leader Nur Misuari dropped the MNLF's demand for independence in favor of limited autonomy, which put five predominantly Muslim provinces and a city in Mindanao into an autonomous region, and for former MNLF rebels to be integrated in the police and military forces.

Misuari became governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. He is now in jail in Manila on rebellion charges. *AFP, AP and Christine Avendaño*



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LDP favors Cha-cha via Con-ass, Con-con

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE OPPOSITION LABAN NG DEMOkratikong Pilipino (LDP) advocates Charter change by way of a constituent assembly or a constitutional convention, its chair Sen. Edgardo Angara said at the party's national party congress yesterday.

The senator, a long-time advocate of Charter change, said all political parties must now arrive at a consensus that there is an immediate need to amend the Constitution.

He urged other political parties to come to some unanimity on Charter change so that the task of constitutional revision can be undertaken within the year.

However, LDP member and Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Ebardone, who is spokesperson of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, said he was for the people's initiative mode of amending the Constitution.

Ebardone said Ulap and the Sigaw ng Bayan group intend to push through with the people's initiative and would ask the Commission on Elections to hold a plebiscite to approve or reject the initiative to amend the Charter as early as August.

Angara said he was for Charter change succeeding but not through the people's initiative that Evardone and others were pushing, "but one that is agreed upon by consensus, either a constitutional convention or a constituent assembly."

"I think the constituent assembly is the more efficient, less costly and more transparent procedure," Angara said. *With a report from Cynthia D. Balana*

Mining firms hit bishop's fact-finding body

By Ronnel W. Domingo
and Christine A. Gaylican

AN ASSOCIATION OF MINING companies yesterday lashed out at the fact-finding commission led by a Roman Catholic bishop that investigated the toxic spills in an Australian company's mine on Rapu-Rapu Island off Albay, describing its findings as biased and "overly dramatized" to "discredit mining as an economic activity."

In a prepared statement issued at a news conference, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines said the Rapu-Rapu fact-finding commission headed by Bishop Arturo Bastes of Sorsogon had upheld allegations that were based on hearsay and not supported by facts.

The commission had recommended that the government stop the operations of Lafayette Philippines Inc. and review the mining act in light of the Rapu-Rapu spills last year which it said had caused skin diseases among residents in the area, contaminated the seas with mercury and diminished the fishermen's catch by up to 80 percent. It also called for a ban on mining on the island.

The chamber said the skin diseases were not proven to be directly related to the mine spills, the fish kills being linked to the spills were "overly dramatized" considering that the spillage volume was "so miniscule compared to the volume of the sea waters; and that the allegations were all hearsay and not supported by facts."

It said that in conducting the probe, the commission used the same framework that the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines espoused when it issued a statement against the industry last January.

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Gringo: I will never surrender

A FORMER PHILIPPINE SENATOR AND EX-colonel wanted for a failed February coup against President Macapagal-Arroyo said Thursday he would never surrender and called on the public to join his struggle.

Gregorio Honasan, who in the 1980s led several coup attempts, accused Arroyo of abusing her power and of refusing to heed the public clamor to resign over allegations she stole the May 2004 vote.

HONASAN

"All forms of legal maneuvers have been exploited and abused by this regime, including a masked martial law," Honasan said, referring to Arroyo's declaration of a state of national emergency in quashing the alleged February plot.

"This then has led me to the decision to be inaccessible. I am now the target of a national manhunt," he said in a statement to news agencies.

"I am not running away, but I have decided to stand with the people in their fight for good government and fundamental reform." Honasan, as well as six prominent leftist legislators, was among 16 political figures charged with rebellion by the Arroyo government.

Among those also charged were Honasan aides.

Arroyo in February said the alleged plot was hatched by communist rebels, political foes, and disgruntled military officers. She placed the country under a week-long state of emergency and fired officers implicated in the plot.

Honasan, a former army colonel, once described himself the country's "resident adviser on failed coup attempts." After several bloody attempts in the 1980s, he won amnesty and subsequently was elected in the Senate. He lost his senatorial bid in the 2002 midterm elections. *AFP*

German wanted for Internet fraud arrested

THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION HAS BEgun deportation proceedings against a German national who is wanted for large-scale Internet fraud in his country and who was arrested in Cavite last week.

.The bureau's Board of Commissioners is set to order this week the deportation of Viktor Graff Kolvenbach, 47, of Troisdorf, Germany, immigration prosecutor Maria Antonette Bucasas said.

Kolvenbach was arrested by a team of immigration and National Bureau of Immigration agents in a house in Dasmariñas, Cavite, after a tip-off from the German Federal Police which has been tracking him down.

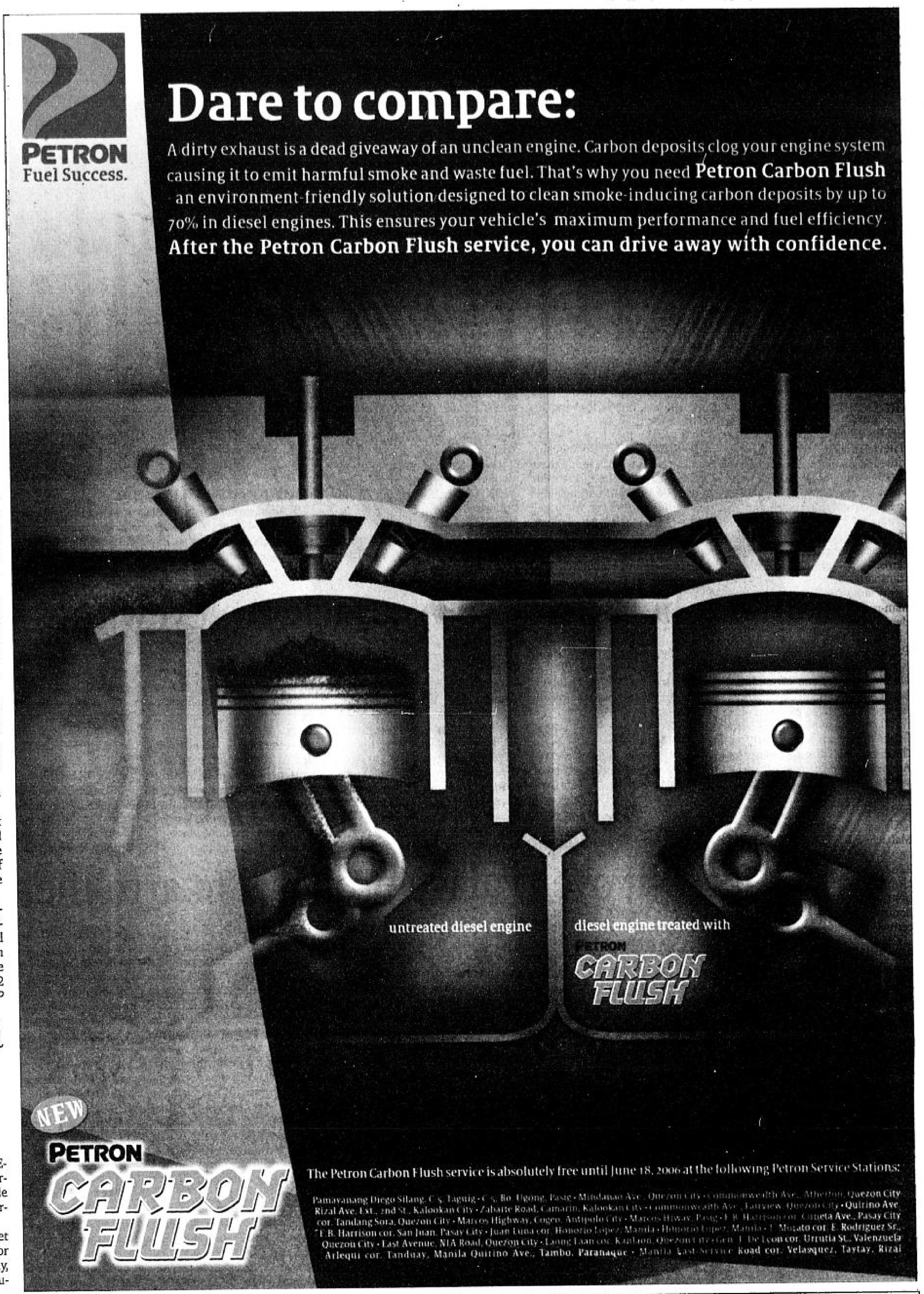
Kolvenbach is wanted for 67 counts of large-scale fraud for operating an auction website but failing to deliver the promised goods. German authorities said he defrauded clients of some P165,000 since he began in 2002.

He arrived in the country on April 26 and was allowed to stay for 21 days. At the time of his arrest on May 17, Kolvenbach had been overstaying his visa.

Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. said Kolvenbach was also considered an undocumented alien at the time of his arrest as the German government had revoked his passport.

The fugitive will be "deported to stand trial in his country for his alleged crimes," the bureau said.

After being expelled, Kolvenbach will be blacklisted and banned from reentering the country. *Leila B. Salaverria*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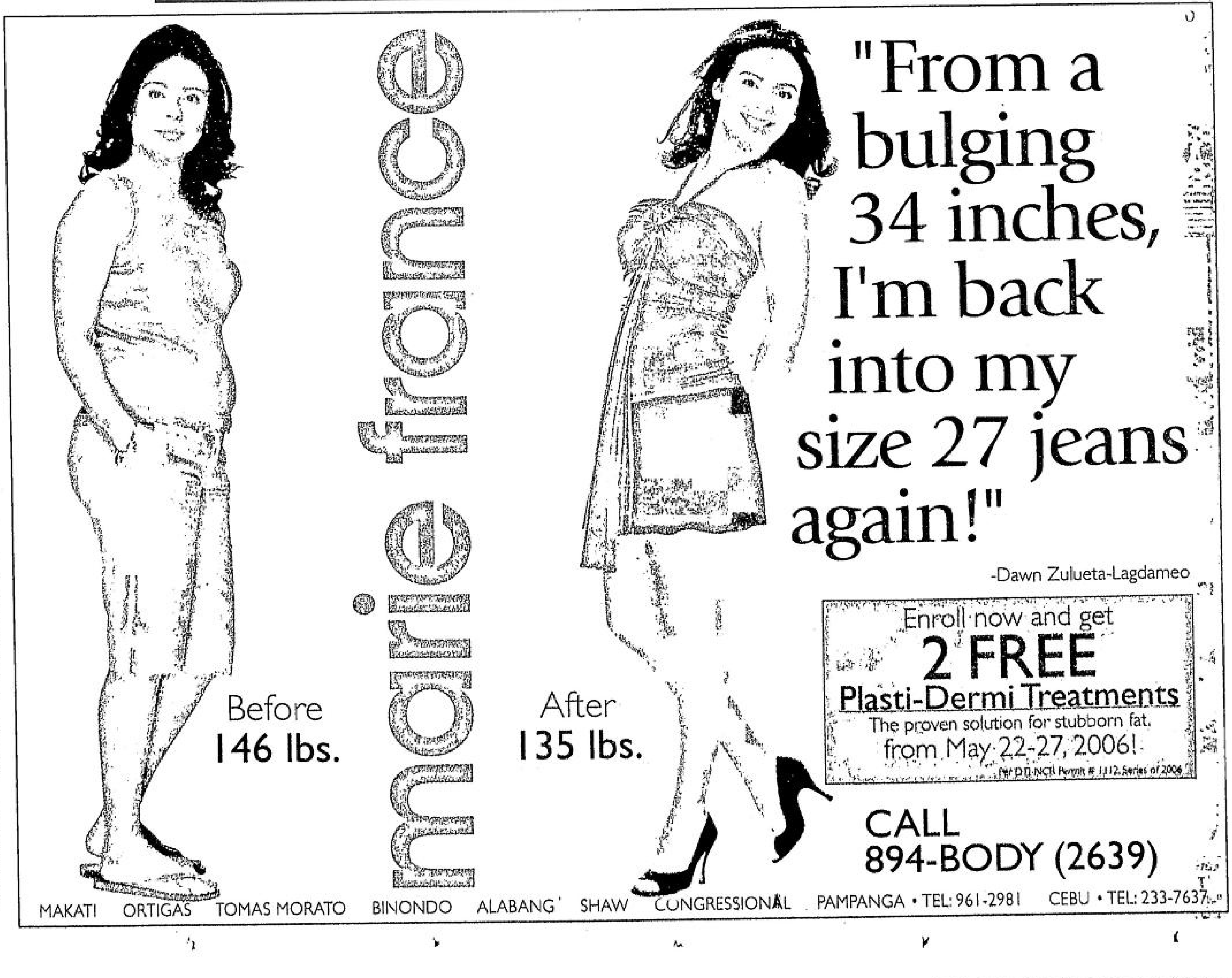

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Army colonel: There were mass killings but not mass-graves types

By Michael Lim Ubac

SO WHERE ARE THE MASS graves?

An Army commander yesterday said there were no mass graves in Bukidnon as earlier claimed by National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales.

"We did not use mass graves or killing fields to describe Bukidnon (in the report) but we stand by our statement that there were 21 documented killings over a period of five years," stressed Lt. Col. Bejamin Madrigal, commander of the 26th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army's 4th Infantry Division.

Madrigal penned the report on which Gonzales had based his assertion that the existence of graves containing skeletal remains of the communist rebels and their sympathizers proved the continuing internal purges within the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

However, Madrigal was quick to tell the INQUIRER in a phone interview that he and his men indeed unearthed the remains of those summarily executed by the CPPs armed component, the New People's Army.

"There were killings but not carried out in a mass-graves-type. We dug them up one by one, in separate adjacent barangays, and in different times," said Madrigal.

Some had been buried in shallow graves, others in barangay cemeteries, he said.

Documentary evidence

"The NPAs were behind the series of killings. They have been terrorizing remote barangays in this province," said Madrigal, pointing out that several documentary and testimonial evidence he had gathered strongly belie the claim of Bukidnon Gov. Jose Zubiri Jr. that the province was a peaceful haven of Christians and Muslims alike.

Zubiri had belied claims by Gonzales, saying the latter only "made it appear that Bukidnon is a massacre field. That's a lie."

Of the 21 cases, the remains of one of the victims were unearthed last April 22 in Barangay Kibongcog, San Fernando, where one of the graves was allegedly found.

Madrigal said the remains belonged to one Gilbert Ortega alias "Intsik," an NPA rebel who was executed after he was suspected to be a military informer.

"We were able to dig up his remains because one of his comrades, who witnessed the killing, confessed to it following his arrest," said Madrigal who said the witness was presented to Gonzales during a briefing on May 13 in Cagayan de Oro City.

HUMANITARIAN MISSION EDWIN BACASMAS

US Ambassador Kristie Kenny receives a memento from Joe Moore, of the hospital ship, the USNS Mercy, and Henry Villareal, commander/executive officer of the USNS. The ship will be here until June as part of a 5-month deployment to the Western Pacific and Southeast Asia to provide medical and dental services. For three weeks, the ship will service Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Batasan 5's best defense vs attack: An eyewitness

From page A1

The safety of the five militant lawmakers—who are all fighting a rebellion charge in connection with the alleged plot to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo in February—has been a matter of concern amid the extrajudicial killing of members of their party-list groups.

Since January 2001, a total of 601 assassinations have been reported.

Of the number, 94 were members of Bayan Muna, 21 of Anakpawis, and five of Gabriela. Sixty-eight were women, according to Maza.

Ample security

Among those killed were regional and provincial leaders of the party-list groups, which Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales have claimed to be "fronts" of the Communist Party of the Philippines, a legal organization.

On Tuesday night, the Batasan 5 visited the INQUIRER office in Makati City with what they called ample security—about a dozen civilians posted innocuously around the building.

An advance party, consisting mostly of young staff members, arrived about an hour ahead of the lawmakers.

They came bearing small boxes of nachos and bottles of the native *basi*, quite unlike the advance parties of other government VIPs, which usually consisted of media coordinators, PR consultants and a retinue of waiters sent by the caterer.

The Batasan 5 security also paled in comparison with other government VIP security, mostly consisting of police escorts on motorcycles and patrol cars, as well as back-up vehicles with heavily tinted windows.

Maza said maintaining a full-blown security detail would be too costly for her and her colleagues.

"We cannot possibly afford it," she said, adding:

"We just have to live a normal life during abnormal times."

'Wrong signal'

Neither can he and his colleagues afford to be in hiding, said Casiño, who, along with three of his colleagues, is listed among the least wealthy members of the House.

"That would be sending a wrong signal to the people," he said.

According to Casiño, the killing of militant activists who have been consistently speaking out against irregularities under the Arroyo administration is intended to sow fear among their ranks and stifle dissent.

"They want to paralyze us by sowing fear; this is what terrorism is all about," Maza said.

Journalists split over Palace proposal to arm themselves

From page A1

"Finally, they (Palace officials) have come to their senses and have heeded our call to give us a fighting chance when confronted with a violent situation," Egco told the INQUIRER.

He added that "media is also responsible to police our ranks" and get rid of "bad eggs" and irresponsible journalists.

But Jose Torres Jr., spokesperson of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), said his group believed that arming journalists would only beget more violence.

"We don't believe in that. We don't believe arming journalists is the right answer to the threats to our lives. It's just an invitation to more violence," Torres also told the INQUIRER.

At least 79 journalists have been killed, mostly by unidentified gunmen on motorcycles, since 1986 when a "people power" uprising ousted the Marcos dictatorship and restored press freedom in the country, according to the NUJP. More than half of the killings have taken place during the Arroyo administration.

The latest fatality, broadcaster Fernando Batul, was shot and killed on Monday in Puerto Princesa City.

Not work-related

Director Emmanuel Carta, chief of Task Force Usig, told the INQUIRER that 31 of the 42 killings involving journalists since 2001 were work-related. "The suspects are those that the victims have written about critically on radio or print," he said.

He said it was the individual's judgment call on whether to seek security from the police or to get a gun.

Carta said the killings could also be partly attributed to the large number of "loose" firearms in the country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has directed the military and police to "look after and account" for journalists, along with left-wing activists and politicians, amid mounting criticisms here and abroad that her administration was purportedly tolerating the killings.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Ms Arroyo issued the order during a security cluster meeting on Tuesday, which was also attended by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales and top military and police officials.

GMA directive

"She has put her foot down. Her directive is very strong—let us stop these killings, look after them and account for them. She wants the police and military to hasten the investigations in order to put to rest the spate of killings," Ermita said in a briefing yesterday in Malacañang.

Egco's ARM is advocating the right of journalists to bring guns for as long as they satisfy legal requirements. It is seeking strict rules in securing permits and licenses as a deterrent against illegal firearms in the hands of criminals.

Arming media persons should not be the end of the government's efforts to solve the killings of journalists, said Egco, a defense reporter of the Manila Standard Today.

"We see that the government has neglected efforts to solve the killings. What is needed to help us journalists prevent the killings is to arrest the perpetrators of past killings and bring them to justice," he said.

Losing end

Torres, online news editor of GMA 7, noted that some of the journalists killed in the past had been armed. "Whether we bring a gun or not, we can still be shot and killed because any suspect intent on killing a journalist will succeed. We are still at the losing end."

He added: "We are not trained to fight and to kill. We are trained to write and to expose the truth. That's the job of the police and the military."

Torres criticized top government officials for their inability to solve the killings.

"While we agree with Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye when he said that the pen is mightier than the sword, we find the statements of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez ironic when he said he is amenable to arming media. It is a virtual admission that the justice system is helpless and inutile to solve the killings," he said.

The government should instead "look deeper and pursue the cases," he said.

"File cases against those who are suspects and masterminds, no matter how high their positions are. They should set an example. We challenge Gonzalez to give teeth to what he is saying and investigate and prosecute the killers of journalists and not look the other way," Torres said.

The justice secretary does not "have the faintest understanding of press freedom" since it was he himself who ordered the National Bureau of Investigation to conduct surveillance on Visayas-based journalists when Presidential Proclamation No. 1017 was issued, he added.

Amnesty Int'l report

Ermita said it was "lamentable" to hear harsh criticisms from local and international groups, including the Amnesty International (AI) which condemned the "climate of impunity shielding the perpetrators," but the former general and defense secretary shrugged them off as nothing new.

He said the government's commitment to human rights was engraved in the Constitution, which, he noted, was the only one in the world that included the establishment of a Commission on Human Rights.

In a statement, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said: "The conjectures of Amnesty International are unfair and misplaced. There is no such thing as climate of impunity in the Philippines. We uphold the rule of law and criminal justice will eventually catch up with killers of whatever bent or stripe."

Bunye said the killings were being investigated and that suspects had already been pinpointed and were being hunted down.

Culture of violence

Reacting sharply to Malacañang's plan to allow "legitimate" members of media to carry firearms to protect themselves from assassins, Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo was quick to describe it as a "bankrupt idea" as it would perpetuate the "culture of violence" in the country.

"Adopting a policy of arming journalists is an admission of failure of governance," said Ocampo, who once worked as business editor of the Manila Times before martial law, during a dinner with INQUIRER senior editors and reporters on Tuesday.

"Does the government want a country with a large group of paranoid and armed journalists who may end up doing more harm than good?" asked Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, erstwhile chair of the House public information committee.

He said arming journalists was not the solution "because this option has long been available to journalists and yet has not deterred their killers."

De Castro

Vice President Noli de Castro also rejected the proposal.

"Arming media men is not and will never be the answer to the spate of killings of journalists," said De Castro, himself a former broadcast journalist for 20 years.

He said that no amount of guns could protect mediamen from determined assassins. "In fact, implementing a measure to arm media people may be seen as an indictment of the failure of our law enforcement authorities to maintain peace and order."

The NUJP spokesperson called on his fellow journalists "to be more vigilant and aware of their safety."

"The best defense is the ethical and responsible practice of journalism," Torres said.

"We respect the desire of journalists to bear arms. They have that opinion as long as they follow the rules. But we don't believe that's the solution. Journalists are better off being more vigilant of their safety and conscious of their security rather than to bring a gun," he said. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Michael Lim Ubac and Cynthia D. Balana*

Finally, it's official: FPJ is National Artist, 6 others

From page A1

nouncement of the awardees who even then included Poe. But hours later, the Palace withdrew the announcement.

Lobbying for Imao

Malacañang officials later explained that the process of selecting this year's awardees, as recommended by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts, was not complete when the first announcement was made.

They said this was because there were groups lobbying for the inclusion of Imao in the final list. Imao was named among this year's winners.

They also said that Poe and the others originally would still get the award.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters that President Arroyo finally signed the proclamation orders declaring this year's awardees.

Ermita said though he did not know when the awards would be conferred on the winners or their families.

Through Proclamation Order Nos. 1065 to 1071, which President Arroyo signed last May 23, seven persons were declared as National Artists for their achievements in their respective fields.

FPJ achievements

Proclamation No. 1069 cited Ronald Allan Poe, more known as FPJ, for his works and achievements in the field of Film.

"...(T)he works and achievements of the late Ronald Allan K. Poe, a.k.a. Fernando Poe Jr., in the field of Film are reflective of this preeminent excellence, and of the national genius that contributes to the artistic heritage of the Philippines and the world," the order said.

Poe, who lost to President Arroyo in the 2004 presidential election, died of an aneurysm in December 2004.

Will widow accept award?

Malacañang has to contend with another possible controversy, whether or not Poe's widow, movie actress Susan Roces, would accept the posthumous award for her husband.

Roces had been vocal about her opposition to the presidency of Ms Arroyo, whom she had accused of stealing the 2004 election from her husband.

Yesterday, Ermita said it was up to Roces to decide whether to attend the awarding ceremony.

"(It) depends on the good Ms Susan Roces to respond and acknowledge once she receives the copy and invitation for the awarding ceremony," Ermita told reporters.

"I am very sure she will be in a good position to make a good decision on the propriety of her accepting the award in behalf of Mr. Fernando Poe Jr. As a wife she will make very a good decision by herself as to how and the manner by which she will receive it. Let's leave it to her, she's a decent person," he said.

Asked if he preferred that Roces attend the awarding ceremony, Ermita said: "We prefer immediate members of the family and supporters would be there."

The National Artist award, created in 1972, acknowledges Filipino achievements that have enhanced the country's cultural heritage.

US Senate to lift immigration cap on nurses; RP hardest hit

From page A1

compensation and has not stirred serious opposition in Congress.

The provision, however, is not part of the House immigration bill. So if the full Congress approves the legislation, a committee from both houses would then have to decide whether to include the provision on nurses.

RP hardest hit

Public health experts in poor countries, who were told about the proposal in recent days, reacted with dismay and outrage, coupled with doubts that their nurses would resist the magnetic pull of the United States, which sits at the pinnacle of the global labor market for nurses.

Removing the immigration cap, the experts said, would particularly hit the Philippines, which sends to the United States at least several thousand nurses a year, more than any other country.

"The Filipino people will suffer because the US will get all our trained nurses," said George Cordero, president of the Philippine Nurses Association. "But what can we do?"

118,000 vacancies

The nurse proposal has strong backing from the American Hospital Association, which reported last month that American hospitals had 118,000 vacancies for registered nurses.

The federal government predicts the accelerating shortfall of nurses in the United States will swell to more than 800,000 by 2020. *New York Times News Service*

RP ranks 125th in int'l environmental protection index

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE PHILIPPINES RANKS 125TH among 146 countries rated by the 2005 Yale Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI), indicating the country's poor ability to ensure sustainable development of its natural resources.

The Philippines, one of the 17 megadiverse countries in the world which together account for up to 80 percent of Earth's biodiversity, only ranked higher than countries like Haiti, Pakistan, Iran, Sudan, Iraq and North Korea.

Bukidnon Rep. Nereus Acosta cited the 2005 ESI during a forum on climate change and renewable energy yesterday as he urged better coordination among government agencies to ensure sustainability.

"It confirms that we are still largely incapacitated when it comes to protecting our environment, averting hazards, reforesting, etc.," Acosta said in an interview after his presentation.

The ESI evaluates countries based on 21 indicators, including natural resources, pollution levels, and environmental management efforts that characterize and influence environmental sustainability on a national scale.

Scandinavian countries such as Finland, Norway and Sweden topped the ESI last year, placing first, second and fourth, respectively.

The ESI is done annually by the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy, along with invited experts from all over the world. The results are presented every year to the World Economic Forum.

"This is evidence that things are not transparent, that people are not being held accountable," said Lorenzo Tan, president of World Wildlife Fund - Philippines.

Tan cited the cases of mining explorations and logging that are being done even in protected areas like the Northern Sierra Madre National Park.

Acosta, a former member of the panel of experts invited by Yale to do the ESI, said the Philippines' ranking was dragged down by its very low performance on social and institutional governance.

Governance, along with environmental systems, vulnerability to stress and disasters, impacts on human health and global stewardship were the major criteria for the ESI.

"What really brought us down was governance. We have rich biodiversity but we don't get our act together, we don't put our money where our mouth is," Acosta said.

He said the Departments of Environment and Natural Resources, Finance, Energy, Transportation and Communication needed to coordinate their initiatives for an ecology-dependent economy.

Acosta said the government's poor investment in science and technology—only 0.2 percent of the gross domestic product—was considered an indicator of institutional support.

The Philippines has only around 150 scientists per one million people, a fact that the ESI also noted, he said.

Acosta called for an environmental accounting of the country's natural resources amid the government's aggressive promotion of mining as the economic growth propeller.

He said the development picture would not be complete if the government considered only the revenues and direct benefits of mining without a valuation of the biodiversity and its other possible benefits that would could be lost due to extractive activities.

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Mag cites Cebu island spa as one of world's best

By Jerome Aning

AN ISLAND SPA RESORT IN CEBU FEATURING local massage "hilot" and seawater therapy has been cited as one of the world's best by leading spa magazine in Asia, the Department of Tourism said yesterday.

The Badian Island Resort and Spa placed eighth in the Top 10 list of foreign journalist and spa expert Marc Tessier of the Hong Kong-based AsiaSpa Magazine. Badian shared the distinction with well-known spas in French Polynesia, Southeast Asia and the Caribbean.

The resort, located on a small island off Badian town in southwestern Cebu, has a unique feature called the "Thalasso," which are spa facilities that are built right into the islet's cliffs and with cascading seawater falls and pools.

Thalasso, which comes from the Greek word "thalassa," meaning "sea," highlights the curative benefits of filtered seawater.

According to the resort's website (www.badianhotel.com), seawater contains a complex blend of natural minerals and antibacterial properties and submersion in it relaxes the body.

While submerged or bathing in seawater the guest is rewarded with a picturesque view of Badian Bay and the mountains of Cebu.

The resort also has what it calls Badehaus facilities which feature spa treatments ranging from the Filipino "hilot" massage to special baths such as herbal, guava, "pandan," "rampe" and Cleopatra.

DOT Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said wellness tourism is part of the agency's broadening of the country's marketability as a destination by way of diversifying its tourism product offerings.

DOT will participate in an international spa industry seminar in Mactan, Cebu this September. Next year, it will host a Wellness Summit in Manila, which would be attended by about 1,000 foreign spa experts and enthusiasts.

Topping Tessier's list were La Taha's Private Island in French Polynesia's Society Islands; followed by Soneva Fushi Resort in the Maldives and Pangkor Laut Resort in Perak, Malaysia.

Others cited were Racha in Thailand, Parrot Cay in Turks and Caicos Islands in the Carribean, Evason Hideaway and Six Senses Spa at Ana Mandara in Vietnam, Sentosa Resort and Spa in Singapore, and the Grand Wailea Resort Hotel and Spa in Hawaii.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, May 25, 2006
6th Week of Easter
Venerable Bede/Gregory VII/Mary Magdalene of Pazzi

1st Reading: Acts 18:1-8
Gospel: John 16:16-20

Jesus said to his disciples, "A little while and you will see me no more; and then a little while, and you will see me."

Some of the disciples wondered, "What does he mean by: 'A little while and you will not see me, and then a little while and you will see me?' And why did he say: 'I go to the Father?'" And they said to one another, "What does he mean by 'a little while?' We don't understand."

Jesus knew that they wanted to question him; so he said to them, "You are puzzled because I told you that in a little while you will see me no more, and then a little while later you will see me.

"Truly, I say to you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to joy."

Commentary

Now Paul meets Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth (who are tentmakers) and lives with them, while he works and preaches on the Sabbath. Then Silas and Timothy join them, but Paul is rejected by many of the Jews, so he turns to the Gentiles, and the Corinthian Church begins.

Jesus is always trying to warn his disciples that he will leave them, but also leaves them the gift of his Spirit. They will know grief but they will also know joy (as Paul does in Acts). Acts tells the story of the work of the Spirit in the Churches, just as Luke's gospel tells the story of the work and life of the Spirit in Jesus. Now, it's time for us to tell the story of what the Spirit does through us in the world.

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MILITANTS AND ACTIVISTS KILLED January 1, 2001 to May 23, 2006

Bayan Muna - 94

Name	Date	Place of Incident
1. Ramon "Bong" Ternida	04-15-2001	Bgy. Masipit, Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro
2. Isidro "Peter" Maniangit	04-27-2001	Purok 5, Pandan, Ligao City, Albay
3. Peter Dangiwan	04-30-2001	Balabalan, Kalinga
4. Juanito Mesias, Jr.	05-13-2001	Kanaga, Leyte
5. Ricardo "Boy" Romero	06-02-2001	Majayjay, Laguna
6. Constancio Gadon	06-23-2001	Sitio Siangi, Bgy. Lisap, Sityo Pag-asa I & II Bgy, Morente, Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro
7. Camenia Abatan	06-23-2001	Talaingod, Davao del Norte
8. Roberto Nepa	06-24-2001	Talaingod, Davao del Norte
9. Miagros Belga	07-22-2001	Bgy. Malinao, Magdalena, Laguna
10. Erwin P. Bacarra	08-01-2001	Sitio Malawaan, Bgy. Montelago, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro
11. Wilfredo Mananghaya	09-20-2001	Bgy. Tartaro, San Miguel, Bulacan
12. Rolando Cabagay	10-06-2001	Bgy. Cagulong, Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro
13. Roger Fernando	10-08-2001	Bgy. Bonbon, Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro
14. Felipe Lapa	10-25-2001	Bgy. Sta Lucia, Nagcarlan, Laguna
15. Nicanor Delos Santos	12-08-2001	Antipolo, Rizal
16. Emilio Santillan	03-12-2002	Bgy. Del Pilar, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro
17. Ildefonso Brucal	03-20-2002	Sitio Puyuhan, Bgy. Teresita, Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro
18. Warlito Nagasao	03-20-2002	Bgy. Villa Campo-laud, Echague, Isabela
19. Manuela Albarillo	04-08-2002	Mindoro Oriental
20. Expedito Albarillo	04-08-2002	Mindoro Oriental
21. Osias Magarzo	05-08-2002	Mindoro Oriental
22. Rodriga Florida Apolinar	05-20-2002	Sitio Bulihan, Bgy. Ilag, San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro
23. Nina Angela Apolinar	05-20-2002	Sitio Bulihan, Bgy. Ilag, San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro
24. Ruben Apolinar	05-20-2002	Sitio Bulihan, Bgy. Ilag, San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro
25. Edilberto Napoles, Jr.	05-28-2002	Ignacio St., Lumangbayan, Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro
26. Eduardo "Boy" Mordido	06-27-2002	Bgy. Gen. Esco, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro
27. Rizza Concha	08-24-2002	Bgy. Ginabucan, Catmon, Cebu
28. Vedasco Anilao Lalong-Isip	11-23-2002	Bgy. Balatero, Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro
29. Oscar Sacdalan	11-23-2002	Mindoro Oriental
30. Anthony Danez Martinez	11-23-2002	Bgy. Talipanan, Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro
31. Jake Soriano	05-15-2003	Isabela
32. Vicente Bico, Jr.	11-06-2003	Brgy. Ibayong Ibaba, Phase II, San Pablo, Laguna
33. Romeo Malabanan	12-23-2003	Bgy. Puypuy, Bay, Laguna
34. Felix Rosquites	01-08-2004	Sabungan, Igangon, Asuncion, Davao del Norte
35. Leyma Fortu	02-13-2004	Bgy. Amiguis, Naujan, Mindoro Oriental
36. Atty. Juvy Magsino	02-13-2004	Bgy. Amiguis, Naujan, Mindoro Oriental
37. Jesus Bongalon	04-01-2004	Bgy. Sooc, Bato
38. Rogolfo Gogo	04-01-2004	Compostela Valley
39. Charlie Davao	04-24-2004	Bgy. Datu Davao, Laak, Compostela Valley
40. Ganadi Pinamalayan	04-24-2004	Bgy. Datu Davao, Laak, Compostela Valley
41. Charlie Utag	04-24-2004	Bgy. Datu Davao, Laak, Compostela Valley
42. Rogelio Perez	04-29-2004	Bgy. Silangang Malicboy, Pagbilao, Quezon
43. Henry Buduan	05-13-2004	
44. Conrado Katigbak	05-13-2004	Bgy. Ikirin, Pagbilao, Quezon
45. Merly Cabatay	06-09-2004	
46. Pablito Ignacio	01-11-2005	112 Brgy. Kasalat, San Ildefonso, Bulacan
47. Ronnie Almaote	02-06-2005	Purok Matahimik,Brgy
48. Abelardo R. Ladera	03-03-2005	Barangay Paraiso, Tarlac City
49. Romeo "Romy" Sanchez	03-09-2005	Baguio City
50. Atty. Felidito C. Dacut	03-14-2005	Arellano cor Real St., Tacloban City
51. Norberto Cabigayan	04-25-2005	Bgy. Borong, Calbiga, Samar
52. Alfredo Davis	04-14-2005	Mahaplag, Leyte
53. Delio Apolinar	04-25-2005	Pamplona, Camarines Sur
54. Diosdado Abunda	05-03-2005	Borongan, Eastern Samar
55. Rev. Edison Lapuz	05-12-2005	San Isidro, Leyte
56. Eddie Dimaano	05-19-2005	Brgy. Tambo, Pamplona, Camarines Sur
57. Adolfo Aquino	07-06-2005	
58. Rev. Raul Y. Domingo	08-20-2005	Palawan
59. Atty. Norman Bocar	09-01-2005	Borongan, Samar
60. Celia Esteban	10-02-2005	Brgy Lennec, Guimba, Nueva Ecija
61. Rolando Mariano	10-05-2005	Gerona, Tarlac
62. Florante Collantes	10-15-2005	Tarlac
63. Tito Macabitos	10-20-2005	San Jose City, Nueva Ecija
64. Rodante Bautista	10-24-2005	La Paz, Tarlac
65. Francisco Rivera	10-26-2005	Angeles City, Pampanga
66. Jose Ducalang	11-10-2005	Brgy. Ipil, Ormoc City, Leyte.
67. Bienvenido Bajado	11-13-2005	Maydolong, Eastern, Samar
68. Clarita Ramirez	11-14-2005	Lupao, Nueva Ecija
69. Ricardo "Ding" Uy	11-18-2005	Barangay Basud, Sorsogon City, Philippines
70. Errol Sending	11-19-2005	Angeles City, Pampanga
71. Gerry Almerino	11-21-2005	Bgy. San Agustin, Palo, Leyte
72. Alma Bartoline	11-21-2005	Bgy. San Agustin, Palo, Leyte
73. Jose Manegdeg III	11-28-2005	Along the National Highway at Barangay Apatot, San Esteban, Ilocos Sur
74. Albert Terredaño	11-29-2005	Bangued, Abra
75. Junie Jacosalem	12-06-2005	Misamis Occidental
76. Jess Alcantara	12-16-2005	San Ildefonso, Bulacan
77. Victorina Gomez	12-16-2005	Brgy. Parian, Mexico Pampanga
78. Allan Villavicencio	12-28-2005	Brgy.Caridad, Tuburan, Cebu,
79. Armando Liabres	01-11-2006	San Ildefonso, Bulacan,
80. Antonio Alde Jr.	01-30-2006	Borongan, Eastern Samar
81. Maximo Frivaldo	01-30-2006	Irosin, Sorsogon
82. Jensen Cristobal	02-18-2006	in front of Honda Center in Paseo de Magallanes, Pasay City
83. Arthur Callosa	03-04-2006	Zone 5 Brgy. Villa Marina, San Jose Nueva Ecija
84. Lorenzo Cervantes	04-05-2006	Barangay Sta.Cruz, Rosario, Agusan del Sur
85. Marilou Rubio	04-22-2006	Brgy. Magsikap, Gen. Nakar, Quezon
86. Jesus Bustenera	04-27-2006	Brgy.Caranday, Baao, Camarines Sur
87. Jayson Delen	04-27-2006	Litana St. Brgy. Gubat, Daet. Cam Norte
88. Jimmy Mirafuente	04-27-2006	Daraga, Albay
89. Ronald Comerciase	04-28-2006	Brgy.Sta.Isabel, Iriga City, Camarines Sur
90. Rev. Jemias Tinambacan	05-09-2006	Along national highway in Brgy. Mobod, Oroquieta City
91. Ric Balauag	05-10-2006	Garet Sur, Echague, Isabela
92. Elena Mendiola	05-10-2006	Garet Sur, Echague, Isabela
93. Manuel Nardo	05-13-2006	Brgy.Queblawan, San Fernando, Pampanga
94. Jose Doton	05-16-2006	San Nicolas, Pangasinan

Anakpawis - 56

Name	Date	Place of Incident
95. Pedro Pesares	Nov2003	Compostela Valley
96. Eddie Gumanoy	04-21-2003	Naujan, Mindoro Oriental
97. Adrian Alegria	02-18-2004	Sta. Cruz. Occidental Mindoro
98. Olimpio Crame	02-22-2004	Bgy. Sohoton, Calape, Bohol
99. Edwin Mascariñas	04-15-2004	Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro
100. Isias Drummond Manano, Jr.	04-28-2004	Pachoca, Calapan City, Mindoro Oriental
101. Samuel "Sammy" Bandilla	10-15-2004	Bgy. 65, Paseo de Legazpi, Tacloban City
102. Concepcion Monsalud	12-04-2004	Purok 3, Lower Calabat, Josefina, Zamboanga del Sur
103. Charlie Monsalud	12-04-2004	Purok 3, Lower Calabat, Josefina, Zamboanga del Sur
104. Eliasar Monsalud	12-04-2004	Purok 3, Lower Calabat, Josefina, Zamboanga del Sur
105. Marcelino Beltran	12-08-2004	San Sotero, Santa Ignacia, Ta
106. Edmundo Salcedo	12-10-2004	In front of elevated town plaza in Daet, Camarines Sur
107. Francisco Gatdula	12-24-2004	Bgy. Pobalcion I, Sta. Cruz, Mindoro Oriental
108. Pedro Lazona	01-22-2005	Tarlac
109. Chrispin Amazona	02-15-2005	Dingalan, Aurora
110. Ernesto Bang	03-10-2005	Brgy. Malangkaw Basud-Labo, Cam Norte
111. Jose Guiriba	03-12-2005	Brgy.Paroros, Donsol, Sorsogon
112. Henry Flores	03-16-2005	Land Transportation Office(LTO) Mandaue City, Cebu
113. Joel Toliao Reyes	03-16-2005	Brgy.. Calero, Jose Panganiban, Camarines Norte
114. Victor Concepcion	03-17-2005	Mexico, Pampanga
115. Alrico Barbas Sr.	07-03-2005	Sta. Rita, Samar
116. Leodegario M. Punzal	09-13-2005	Norzagaray, Bulacan
117. Diosdado Fortuna	09-22-2005	Calamba, laguna
118. Armando Javier	10-02-2005	Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija
119. Ponciano Silva	10-11-2005	Unisan, Quezon
120. Pederico de Leon	10-26-2005	Malolos, Bulacan
121. Abner Dalan	01-23-2006	Camarines Sur
122. Agnes Abellon	03-20-2006	San Marcelino , Zambales
123. Amante Abellon	03-20-2006	San Marcelino , Zambales
124. Jay M. Allunar	02-05-2006	Makilala, Cotabato
125. Romeo Leovate	02-09-2006	Mulanay, Quezon

Others - 96

Name	Organization	Date	Place of Incident
1. Eric Canlas	Aguman Maglalautang de Capampangan(AMC)	01-05-2001	San Antonio, Mexico
2. Eduardo Noma	TAPAT	02-13-2001	Bgy. Danlagan, Lopez, Quezon
3. Amal Arsem	Bayan Muna member (not in BM list)	03-29-2001	So. Lupayan, Mitadag, Leon B. Postigo, Zamboanga del Norte
4. Alfeo Arceno	Solidarity Mass Movement (SMM)	04-30-2001	Bgy. Buenavista, Manicani Island, Guiuan, Eastern Samar
5. Cenon Montipon	JPAG-chairperson	06-13-2001	So. Kasong, Bgy. Tinuyop, Leon P. Pustigo, Zamboanga del Norte
6. Samuel Bento	Tribal Organization of San Jose(TOSJ)	09-06-2001	Bukidnon
7. Rodolfo Bazing	San Luis Bukidnon Native Farmers Association(SLNBFA)	10-13-2001	Bukidnon
8. Ananias Tayuhan	SLNBFA	10-13-2001	Bukidnon
9. Dominador Aniceto	Katipunan ng mga Samahan ng Magbubukid sa Rizal (KASAMA- Rizal)	10-21-2001	So. Ysiro Bgy. San Jose, Antipolo City
10. Reynaldo Dela Rosa	KASAMA- Rizal	10-21-2001	So. Ysiro Bgy. San Jose, Antipolo City
11. Emiliano Dela Rosa	KASAMA- Rizal	10-21-2001	So. Ysiro Bgy. San Jose, Antipolo City
12. Jose Raul Maguiza	KASAMA- Rizal	10-21-2001	So. Ysiro Bgy. San Jose, Antipolo City
13. Johnny Lapore	Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas(PA-MALAKAYA)	11-02-2001	Bgy. Maricalum-Baybay, Sipalay City Negros Oriental
14. Allan Lapore	Corral-PA-MALAKAYA	11-02-2001	Bgy. Maricalum-Baybay, Sipalay City Negros Oriental
15. Richard Menguilio	Corral-PA-MALAKAYA	11-02-2001	Bgy. Maricalum-Baybay, Sipalay City Negros Oriental
16. Renato Pontanoza	TMI-PUMALAG-KMP	11-07-2001	Bgy. Imok, Calauan, Laguna
17. Pakling Basa	Samahan ng Pantribung Mangyan ng Mindoro (SPMM)	12-11-2001	Sitio Arasaas, Bgy. San Roque, Bulalacao, Oriental Mindoro
18. Delimo Baydal	Kaugmaon-KMP	01-17-2002	So. Punong, Bgy. Trinidad, Guihulngan, Negros Oriental
19. Teodoro Segui, Jr.	Bicol Coconut Planters Association Inc. (BCPAI)	04-12-2002	Crossing, Bgy. Bonbon, Libon, Albay
20. Warlito Bayanban	Farmers Association of Davao City(FADC)	04-15-2002	Pangyan, Marilog Dist. Davao
21. Charles Bayanban	FADC	04-15-2002	Pangyan, Marilog Dist. Davao
22. Edgar Bias	FADC	04-15-2002	Pangyan, Marilog Dist. Davao
23. Jaimae Daculo	FADC	04-15-2002	Pangyan, Marilog Dist. Davao
24. Apolonio Enoc	FADC	04-15-2002	Pangyan, Marilog Dist. Davao
25. Rosha Icatan	FADC	04-15-2002	Pangyan, Marilog-Dist. Davao
26. Tirso Ebuenga Sorsogon	People's Organization/HRPO	12-04-2002	Bgy. Cabiguhan, Gubat, Sorsogon
27. Morito Arcademia	Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas(KMP)	12-13-2002	Sipalay, Negros Occidental
28. Abdulbayan Cervantes	Hugpong	04-17-2003	Pk.3 Bongbong, Pantukan, Compostela Valley
29. Eden Marcellana	Alyansa sa Pagsusulong ng Karapatang Pantao	04-21-2003	Naujan, Orinetal Mindoro
30. Henerio Ybanez	NEBFA	07-01-2003	
31. Efren Agsayang	Tabbak, Mankayan, Benguet	09-21-2003	Gadagad, Mankayan, Benguet
32. Lito Doydoy	AnakBayan	09-23-2003	Maco, Compostella Valley
33. Jonathan Benayo	Anak ng Bayan	09-23-2003	Maco, Compostela Valley
34. Marjore Reynoso	Anak ng Bayan	09-23-2003	Municipality of Maco, Compostella Valley
35. Angelito Mabansag	Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (KADAMAY)	09-28-2003	416 Osmena, St., Tondo Manila
36. Ronilo Cabacoy	HUMABI-KMP	11-20-2003	Mabini, Bohol
37. Bnuenavanturado Potane	HUMABI-KMP	11-20-2003	Mabini, Bohol
38. Susan Habac-Aringo	Gabriela	12-07-2003	Sitio Muladbucad, Bgy. San Isidro, Castilla, Sorsogon
39. Eugenio Furog	PRO - HUMABOL KMP	06-13-2004	Bgy. San Roque, Talibon, Bohol
40. Merlinda Trinidad Carvajal	Gabriela	08-27-2004	Bgy. Dila, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
41. Joel Baclao	Andurog Bikol (disaster relief program) and Promotion of Church People's Response	11-10-2004	Lacag, Daraga, Albay
42. Myrna Tabata	AP member/ Bgy. Kagawad	11-16-2004	Tudela, Misamis Occidental
43. Jhune David	member of United Luisita Workers Union	11-16-2004	Central Azucarera de Tarlac, Hacienda Luisita, Tarlac
44. Jesus Laza	member of ULWU, stockholder of HL	11-16-2004	Central Azucarera de Tarlac, Hacienda Luisita, Tarlac
45. Vicente Olea	SUMAPA leader	11-24-2004	Palawan
46. Loyloy Garcia		02-01-2005	Brgy.Seran, Guagua Pampanga
47. Noel Garcia	AMC	02-01-2005	Brgy.Seran, Guagua Pampanga
48. Abe Sungit	KARAPATAN	02-05-2005	Brgy. Malcampo, Roxas
49. Rodrigo Lampa	AMC	02-16-2005	Brgy. Lambac, Guagua, Pampanga
50. Renato Espino	AMC	02-18-2005	Lakeshore, Mexico Pampanga
51. Rodel Pelayo	Central Luzon Aeta Association (CLAA)	02-20-2005	Rd. Side, between Brgy. Culo and Brgy. Saging, Balanga, Bataan
52. Joey Abraham	CLAA	02-20-2005	Balanga, Bataan
53. Emiliano Nardo	BDFA and API-KA	03-08-2005	Brgy. Dalusdoson, Hinabangan, Samar
54. Sammy Dote	COURAGE	04-11-2005	Bgy. 3, Catbalogan, Samar
55. Manuel Edwin Bargamento	Negros Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW)	04-13-2005	Manapla, Negros Occidental
56. Renante Alesna	KMP	04-17-2005	Negros Occidental
57. Atty. Ambrocio Matias	AP Municipal Coordinator-NE, AMGL Counsel	05-08-2005	Brgy.Gen.Luna, Gen. Llanera, Nueva Ecija
58. Leonard Matias	son of Atty. Matias	05-08-2005	Brgy.Gen.Luna, Gen. Llanera, Nueva Ecija
59. Alfredo Malinao	KAMAS	05-12-2005	San Isidro, Leyte
60. Jessie Bacasmas	Lumad	05-12-2005	Lianga, Surigao del Sur
61. Mario Fernandez	NFSW	06-10-2005	Silay, Negros Occ
62. Manuel Batolina	NFSW	06-13-2005	Negros Occ.
63. Antonio Pantonial	NFSW	07-06-2005	Negros Occ
64. Usting Bantillan	NFSW	07-13-2005	Negros Occ
65. Nilo Bayas	Samahan ng Mag-uuling sa Sapang Bulak	07-17-2005	Sapang Bulak, Dona Remedios Trinidad, Bulacan
66. Renier Cusio	UMAGPAS-KMP	09-12-2005	Guimba, Nueva Ecija
67. Leodegario M. Punzal	Anakpawis Norzagaray, Bulacan	09-13-2005	Poblacion, Norzagaray, Bulacan
68. Victoria P. Samonte	KMU; Andres Soriano College Employees Union	09-30-2005	Brgy. Mancarogo, Bislig City
69. Ramon Namuro	AJODOM-PISTON	10-15-2005	Pio Valenzuela, Caloocan City
70. Ricardo Ramos	Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union	10-25-2005	Brgy.Mapalacsiao, Hacienda Luisita, Tarlac
71. Jesus Lombo, Jr.	Coconut Planters Association, Inc.-KMP	10-26-2005	Sitio Ocwao, Baya (Ragay, Camarines Sur?)
72. Jimmy Legaspi Union	BOD Sierra Madre Bus Line Co.	11-01-2005	Bus Stop-Over at Junction, San Simon, Pampanga
73. Marivel T. Supeña	Bayan	11-20-2005	Quezon, Nueva Ecija
74. Danilo Supeña	Bayan	11-20-2005	Quezon, Nueva Ecija
75. Rommel Arcilla	Bayan	PELCO	11-21-2005 Florida, Pampanga
76. Cathy Alcantara	Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya	12-05-2005	Abucay, Bataan
77. Alfredo Manaol Jr.	AMB	12-13-2005	
78. Romeo Atienza	Bayan	12-15-2005	Brgy. Parian, Mexico Pampanga
79. Noel Daray	WL Foods workers' assoc.	12-25-2005	Galas St., Bignay, Valenzuela
80. Ofelia "Perla" Torno-Rodriguez	Divisoria Farmers Association - AMC AMGL	01-16-2006	inside home in Brgy. Divisoria, Mexico, Pampanga
81. Mateo Morales	Indigenous Rights worker of Religious of the Good Shepherd's Tribal Filipino Ministry	01-24-2006	Brgy. Dona Flavia, San Luis, Agusan del Sur
82. Alvino Tacadao	Nagkahiusang Mag-uuma sa Nabundasan	02-03-2006	Sitio Salvacion, Nabundasan, Tulunan, Cotabato
83. Salvador Dante Y. Villarasa Jr.	Farmers Mortuary Association	02-03-2006	Sitio Concepcion, Kisante, Makilala, Cotabato
84. Benjaline Hernandez	Karapatan	04-05-2002	North Cotabato
85. Audie Lucero	Youth for Nationalism and Democracy	02-13-2006	Abucay, Bataan
86. Florencio Agunos	Rizal Leyte Small Farmers Association	02-15-2006	Bgy. Rizal Kananga, Leyte
87. Melanio Evangelista Jr.	Kapunungan sa mga Mag-uuma sa Surigao del Sur	02-17-2006	Brgy. Unidad, Cagwait, Surigao del Sur
88. Narciso Senon	KMP-SMR	02-23-2006	Purok 6-B of Barangay Limbaan, New Corella, 500 meters from the deyachment of 60th IBPA and 72nd IBPA
89. Nestor Anrique	HUMABI	03-07-2006	Provincial Road of Purok I, Abaca, Mabini, Bohol,
90. Crisanto "Santi" Teodoro	Bagong Alyansang Makabayan	03-09-2006	Malolos, Bulacan
91. Tirso Cruz	ULWU Director, Coordinator-AP	03-17-2006	TARLAC barangay Pando, Concepcion Tarlac
92. Cris Hugo	League of Filipino Students	03-19-2006	Barangay Washington Drive, Legazpi City
93. Porferio Maglasang	Pambansang Katipunan ng Makabayang Magbubukid	04-22-2006	Barangay Camansi in Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental
94. Liezelda "Inday" Cunado	Gabriela	04-03-2006	Brgy. Panadtaran, Candijay, Bohol
95. Enrico Cabanit	Pambansang Ugnayan ng mga Nagsasariling Local na Organisasyon sa Kanayunan	04-24-2006	Panabo, Davao del Norte
96. Elpidio de la Victoria	Visayan Sea Squadron, Bantay Dagat Commission	04-20-2006	Brgy. Dauis, Talisay, Cebu
97. Anna Liza Gandia a.k..a. Annaliza Abanador	Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya	05-18-2006	Balanga, Bataan

Sources: Karapatan, Bayan Muna website, Asian Human Rights Commission and PDI Archives

PDI Research

WEATHER FORECAST

Ready rain gear, studes told; 3 typhoons to hit RP in June

By Alcuin Papa

RAINY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN, ACCORDing to weather officials who warned students and parents gearing for the school opening on June 5 that 17 typhoons are expected to hit the country this year.

Three of the typhoons are predicted to hit the Philippines in June though they are not expected to be as strong nor as destructive as the last one, Caloy, which hit the country early this month and left 47 people dead and thousands more homeless and caused an estimated P40 million worth of damage to agriculture.

Nathaniel Cruz, director of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, explained that the Philippines experiences an average of 20 typhoons a year. So far, three have already hit the country since the start of the year.

Speaking at the Ciudad Fernandina forum yesterday, Cruz said he did not expect the three typhoons that are to hit in June to adversely affect the opening of classes. But he told students and parents to be prepared for the rainy season.

Cruz warned the public against bathing or soaking in the first rains after the summer—which he calls "April showers"—as there are pollutants mixed in with the rain.

"April showers normally contain pollutants at this time. So taking a bath in the rain is not advisable because it may cause irritation to the skin," he said.

Cruz said a hailstorm like the one that occurred in Antipolo last Tuesday could happen again anywhere in the country. He said hailstorms are caused by thunderstorms, or heavy rains with thunder and lighting, which follow periods of extremely hot or humid weather.

Pagasa is working with the Department Education in the "Oplan Balik Eskwela," a multiagency and sectoral task force, to ensure the smooth opening of classes next month.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

GENERAL SERVICES CONTRACT FOR SOUTHERN NEGROS GEOTHERMAL PRODUCTION FIELD (SNGPF)
EDC 06-048

The approved project cost is P 7,777,928.52 to be charged against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is Two (2) years.

Application forms for eligibility and the bidding documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group, Fort Bonifacio (c/o N.P. Calling) starting **May 15, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Pesos: One Thousand (P 1,000.00).**

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **June 9, 2006, 9:30 p.m.** at PNOC-EDC SNGPF Admin Complex, Ticala, Valencia, Negros Oriental. Site inspection will follow thereafter.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor Building 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on June 23, 2006 (Contracts Administration Group Office Wall Clock Time)** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI–May 25, 2006)

HYUNDAI DARES!
THE CORDILLERA CHALLENGE

THE OPEN STRETCH

DAY TWO'S TRIUMPH:
Engine Responsiveness

The second day of the Hyundai Dares: The Cordillera Challenge further proved the durability and, plush safety and comfort features of all five vehicles participating in this groundbreaking dare. The Getz, Matrix, Tucson, Accent and Starex were observed to have more than enough power and acceleration to get through 200kms of the rough and tumble driving conditions from Baguio, Sagada and Banawe.

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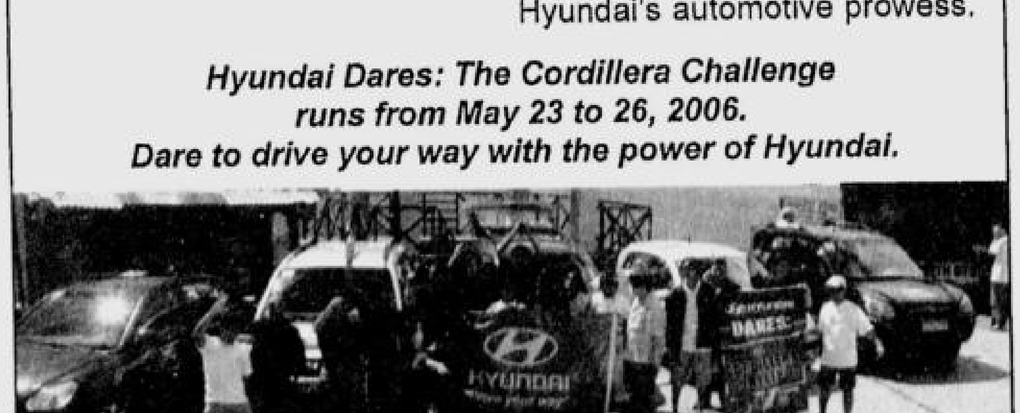

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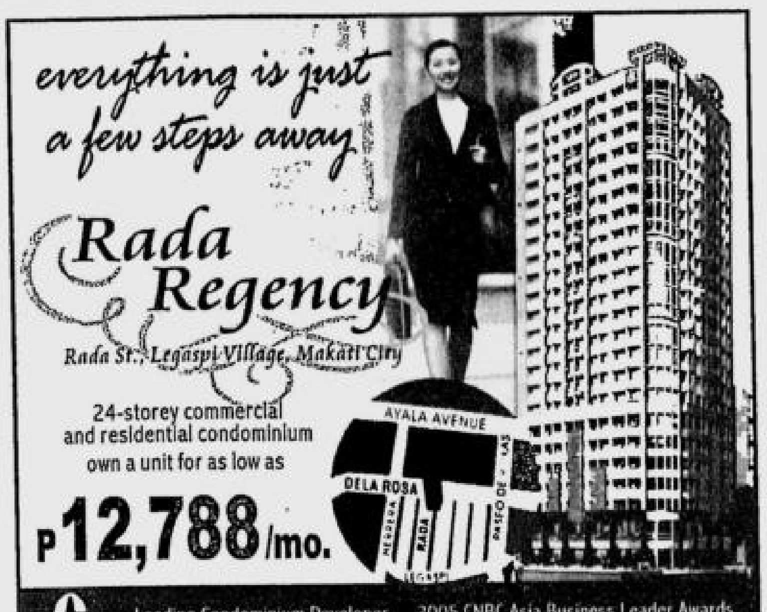

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May 27, Sat. 8:30 am - 2:30 pm, Basic and Advanced Cookie Design Learn the latest New York craze for gift giving, wedding and corporate giveaways! Bake your own delicious cookies and decorate them with Modelling Chocolate, Fondant, Royal Icing, Dragees, gilding and so on. Truly elegant and outstanding designs that look too good to eat! P 2500

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May 30, Tuesday , 8:30 am to 12:30 pm ECLAIRS and CREAM PUFFS: Turn Pate Choux paste into sweet and savory delights; also included are Profiteroles, Cream Puffs, Beignet de Jambon, Gougere, Fruit Coulis HANDS ON, P 1500

May 30, Tuesday, 1 – 5 pm MASTERING CHEESECAKES: Learn the essentials of producing perfect cheesecakes both baked and unbaked, different crusts and toppings: Classic New York Cheesecake, Maida Heatter's Bullseye Cheesecake, Oreo Cheesecake, Blueberry Cheesecake, No Bake Cheesecake HANDS ON, P 2000

STEAKHOUSE CLASSES
May 31, Wednesday, 9 am to 12:30 NEW YORK STEAKHOUSE: Learn the techniques of cooking the perfect steak: Steak with Cognac Cream Sauce, Grilled Pork Chop with Bourbon Mustard Glaze, Creamed Spinach and Truffled Mashed Potato HANDS ON, P2200

May 31, Wednesday, 2 – 5 pm FRENCH STEAKHOUSE: Steak au Poivre, Pommes Alumette, Cote d'Agneau Grille a la Bernaise, Pommes Anna, Oysters Mignonette P 2,200

NOTICE OF 22-HOUR WATER SERVICE INTERRUPTION IN PARTS OF PASAY AND MANILA

Maynilad Water Services Inc. has scheduled a 22-hour water service interruption in parts of Pasay City and Manila from 11:30 p.m., Friday, May 26, 2006 to 9:30 p.m., Friday, May 27, 2006.

The water service interruption is due to the replacement of a 600mm-diameter gate valve along F.B. Harrison corner Chingkian, Pasay City.

The project is meant to improve the water supply in the area. The following areas will have no water during the service interruption:

In Pasay: Along Taft Ave. from Estrada to Libertad and lateral streets; along Libertad from Taft Ave. to Roxas Blvd. and lateral streets; along Roxas Blvd. from EDSA to Vito Cruz and lateral streets; Along F.B. Harrison from Vito Cruz to EDSA and lateral streets; area bounded by Taft Ave., Park Ave., EDSA and F.B. Harrison; CCP Complex; GSIS and Senate Bldg.; World Trade Center; and PNB Bldg. In Manila: Along Estrada St. from Del Carmen to Taft Ave. and lateral streets; along Vito Cruz from Taft Ave. to Roxas Blvd. and lateral streets; Harrison Plaza; Central Bank of the Philippines; Dela Salle University; St. Scholastica; Rizal Coliseum; and Century Park Hotel.

In view of the water service interruption, affected customers are advised to store water good for 22 hours. They may check with Maynilad Hotline 1626, the nearest branch office, or their barangay chairman for the schedule of water rationing in their respective areas.

Maraming salamat po sa inyong pang-unawa.

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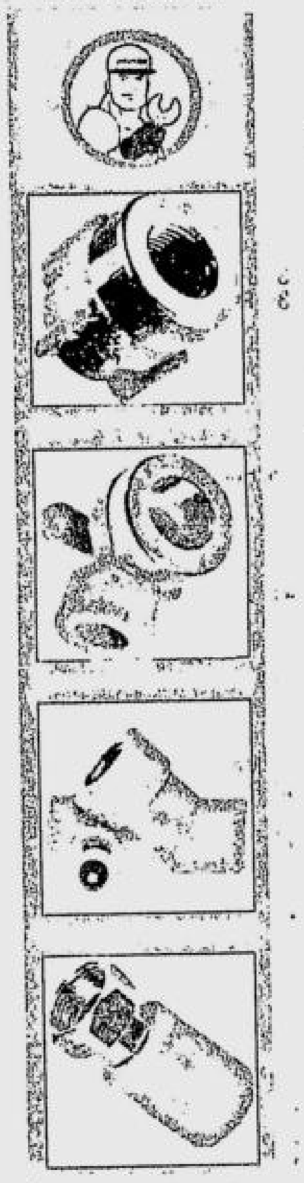

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AFP admits: We seized Erap men

From page A1

The military's admission—48 hours after the men were arrested—came after the Commision on Human Rights slammed "a pattern of impunity" that had marked violence against political militants and the Amnesty International deplored continuing human rights abuses in the country.

Prior to confirming the arrest of the five, a military spokesperson denied that the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) was holding the "missing" men.

The five—Virgilio Eustaquio, Ruben Dionisio, Jim Lucio Cabauatan, Dennis Ibuna and Police Officer 3 Jose Justo Curameng—were taken from Eustaquio's house in Kamuning, Quezon City, on Monday by plainclothes military and police intelligence agents, who did not identify themselves.

Eustaquio is chair of the Union of the Masses for Democracy and Justice (UMDJ), which is associated with Estrada.

Gov't always blamed

Before the military announced it was holding the five, Ermita told Malacañang reporters: "They will always point the blame against the administration but rest assured that we are not doing it because it would only cause destabilization. Why would we choose those belonging to the opposition, we don't want to do that. The government is always the natural suspect when these things happen."

When told that the military was about to make an announcement about the arrest of the Estrada supporters, Ermita said: "These are operational matters that you don't expect the Palace to have knowledge of."

He dismissed claims that this was part of the political harassment against Estrada.

Col. Tristan Kison, AFP public information chief said the five had been in Isafp's custody since their arrest.

But on Tuesday, Kison denied the five men were being held by the military even as their families went looking for them at the Isafp compound in Camp Aguinaldo.

Isafp guards told them the missing men were not inside.

Kison reasoned out that Isafp chief Commodore Leonardo Calderon, did not get the report about the arrest made by Military Intelligence Group 15 and the Philippine National Police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group until Tuesday night.

MIG15 holds office inside the Isafp compound, and military insiders said it would be very unusual for operations to be conducted without authority from the Isafp chief.

Kison said the government agents were only after Dionisio, whom he alleged to be an intelligence officer of the so-called Special Operations Group of the New People's Army.

The four others happened to be with Dionisio at the time "so our operatives thought of bringing them along," he said.

No basis to link Erap

"If ever they are supporters of former President Estrada, that is incidental," Kison said, adding the military had no basis to link Estrada to the assassination plot.

He said Dionisio was arrested based on information from an alleged ranking communist leader in Bulacan, Delfin de Guzman, who had supposedly confessed to being part of an NPA hit squad that had killed former rebel leaders Arturo Tabara and Romulo Kintanar.

The military presented De Guzman to media last Monday.

The charges against the five were filed by the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

"They allegedly hatched the assassination plot in furtherance of rebellion ... to paralyze the government ... and sow chaos and anarchy," said Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco.

Son of FPJ supporter

One of those charged, Jim Cabauatan, is the son of the defunct Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police's Col. Rolando Cabauatan.

The elder Cabauatan was one of the retired officers who supported the presidential bid of the late Fernando Poe Jr. in the 2004 elections.

Prosecutors said the five were nabbed while holding a meeting at Eustaquio's house.

Velasco said that police agents seized from the five an AK-47 assault rifle, a 9-mm pistol, and subversive documents.

"They were pointed to as assassins by Delfin de Guzman," he said.

According to Velasco, Dionisio was found to have alleged links with leftist rebels.

"This is part of a broad alliance of the Left and the Right," Velasco said.

Dionisio removed his shirt and showed alleged marks of torture when he and his four companions were presented to media last evening.

He said electric shocks were applied to his genitals and he was forced to admit to involvement in the plot.

Velasco denied his claims, saying it was normal for accused people to claim torture.

He said some of the five already initiated moves to monitor the movements of Gonzalez, but decided against ambushing him near the DOJ because of its proximity to the headquarters of the Western Police District and the National Bureau of Investigation.

"They had been looking for other routes to hit him," he said.

Gonzalez has taken to using a bullet-proof car to move around.

Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno said the five Estrada supporters were "in good condition."

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Jinggoy Estrada condemned the secrecy surrounding the arrest and detention of the five and the filing of charges against them.

Gestapo-like tactics

"They should have said so from the very beginning. We should not allow this Gestapo-kind of picking up people," Pimentel said.

"The families of the five persons do not even know who picked up members of their families and where they were being brought. Can you imagine the anxiety that this caused their families?" he added.

Senator Estrada, for his part, took the floor again this time to denounce the filing of rebellion charges against the five men.

"They never planned to destabilize or overthrow this government. This government has been destabilized by the usurper," he said, stressing that the UMDJ was a legitimate organization "that seeks to bring about meaningful change in our society through legal and peaceful means."

Former President Estrada condemned the Isafp for its action.

"The abduction of my five supporters was a criminal act and cannot be tolerated under a society governed by laws. What they did showed their total disregard for our laws and those behind the abduction must be meted [out] the appropriate punishment," he said in a statement. *With reports from TJ Burgonio and Nelson Flores)*

Jimenez to donate . . .

From page A1

scribers and another P25 million to College Assurance Plan subscribers so the children-beneficiaries of the failed plans may enroll in time for the opening of classes next month.

To give check this morning

Jimenez said he would hand over a check for an initial P10 million this morning to the PPI plan holders who are fighting a libel case at the Makati Regional Trial Court.

He said he would also offer to refund the P340,000 bail bond paid by those who were charged with libel by the PPI management.

Jimenez said he hoped his move would start a fund campaign to help the plan holders. He expected businessmen, corporations and even ordinary people to contribute their share.

He said the money would be placed in a trust fund but the initial donation should be used to pay for the tuition of the poorest among the PPI and CAP plan holders.

Rare appearance

Jimenez has rarely appeared in public since returning to the country in December 2005 after serving a 27-month sentence in a US federal prison.

He said he had found inner peace and new purpose after his stint in prison.

The former Manila congressman and adviser to ousted President Joseph Estrada was convicted of tax fraud and making illegal campaign contributions to the US Democratic Party.

The planned donation to the pre-need victims will be the biggest that Jimenez shall have given to any one group. He reportedly gave P200 million to various charities and causes, including the landslide victims in Leyte province, since returning to the country.

TO THE RESCUE of parents allegedly victimized by Pacific Plans and College Assurance Plan, Mark Jimenez writes a check for P20 million as seed money for the policy holders in his penthouse at the Essensa, The Fort in Makati City. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

No political color

Jimenez said his charitable work had nothing to do with any plans for a political comeback. He denied he was planning to run for any position in 2007 or at any other time.

"My concern is personal. I don't have any [political] color, agenda, bias but only my desire to help the children fulfill their dreams of having an education and to become better Christians," he said.

Jimenez said he was appalled at the fate of the pre-need subscribers and at the owners of PPI and CAP.

"How can this man, who is a billionaire and at his age, sleep knowing that these children who need education cannot go to school and you used the legal system [to escape responsibility]?" Jimenez said.

'I signed as Jose Velarde but bank account not mine'

From page A1

Frequently interrupted by medical treatment for Estrada's eyes and ailing knees, the trial entered a final stage this year with his appearance as defense witness.

The prosecution rested its case in 2003 after presenting 76 witnesses and more than 1,500 pieces of evidence.

P500-M loan

Estrada said Ocampo and lawyer Manuel Curato had brought an investment management agreement, signature cards, investment guidelines and a debit credit authority for him to sign.

"These are the documents they brought to Malacañang for my signature. That is true. I did sign it through Jaime Dichaves' plea," he said.

Estrada said the purpose of signing as Jose Velarde was to facilitate a P500-million loan for the Wellex Group of Companies owned by William Gatchalian, another friend and election supporter.

He said that Gatchalian needed to borrow a large amount of money from the bank, and that he had agreed to sign using the alias to act as a guarantor.

IN THE KNOW

The Jose Velarde account

THE "JOSE VELARDE" ACCOUNT is said to be deposed President Joseph Estrada's secret account with Equitable-PCI Bank.

According to bank documents, Savings Account No. 0160-62501-5 was opened on Aug. 26, 1999, at the bank's Pacific Star branch in Makati City with an initial deposit of P1. The following day, the amount rose to P81,000,001 with the deposit of two checks.

When the account was closed on Nov. 10, 2000, it contained more than P3.23 billion in cash deposits, interest (P3.3 million), treasury bill proceeds and check deposits.

The recorded check depositors are businessmen Dante Tan, Lucio Co, Ramon Lee, Jaime Dichaves, Manuel Pangilinan, Mark Jimenez and Antonio Evangelista, and a certain Kevin Garcia—the biggest check depositor with a P175-million contribution.

During Estrada's impeachment trial, the House prosecution panel claimed that Kevin Garcia was actually tycoon Lucio Tan.

In a February 2002 interview with Pia Hontiveros, which was aired on the ANC News Channel, Estrada admitted to signing bank documents as Jose Velarde, but only "as guarantor of William Gatchalian for the account of Jaime Dichaves, who owns the account."

The ousted President also said Jose Velarde was Dichaves', and not his, alias. *PDI Research*

Estrada said he was motivated chiefly by concern about Gatchalian's 3,000 employees who would have lost their jobs without the loan.

Dichaves letter

"Since there were no government funds involved, I agreed to sign the documents," the ousted President said.

He also said the documents he signed were not used because the bank eventually disapproved the loan.

Estrada said Dichaves was the true owner of the Jose Velarde account, as shown by the latter's Aug. 25, 1999, letter to Romuald Dy Tang, senior vice president of Equitable-PCI Bank.

In the letter, Dichaves requested Tang that an account under the name Jose Velarde be opened, and that all transactions involving the account be coursed through him.

WHAT WENT BEFORE

Clarissa Ocampo testimony

"WHEN HE SIGNED 'Jose Velarde,' I just couldn't believe it. He did not sign his real name."

That statement was part of the explosive testimony of surprise prosecution witness Clarissa Grey Ocampo, a senior vice president of Equitable-PCI Bank, on Dec. 22, 2000.

She made the testimony before the Senate impeachment court, which was trying then President Joseph Estrada for bribery, corruption, betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution.

Ocampo claimed to have been a foot away from Estrada in Malacañang on Feb. 4, 2000, when he signed as Jose Velarde on documents instructing the bank to give a P500-million "directional loan" to the Wellex Group owned by businessman William Gatchalian.

The loan was supposedly intended as "additional working capital."

Ocampo said bank lawyer Manuel Curato, as well as Aprodicio Laquian, then Estrada's chief of staff, also witnessed the signing.

In her testimony, Ocampo recounted that the night before she brought the documents to Estrada at the Palace, she was introduced to lawyer Fernando Chua at a party held at the Equitable Building in Makati City.

She quoted Chua, Estrada's high school classmate and then personal lawyer, as telling her that his client wanted to lend money to a corporation.

Ocampo also testified that Estrada kept a hidden account in Equitable-PCI Bank under the name Jose Velarde. *PDI Research*

But Special State Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said the defense had never submitted an original copy of the letter, according to The Associated Press.

AP quoted Estrada as telling reporters after the hearing that Dichaves had been threatened to prevent him from testifying.

"They have scared him away; that's why he has fled. Here, if you do not cooperate with them, they will threaten you, or they will abduct you," he said, apparently referring to the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Dichaves' whereabouts have been unknown since Estrada's ouster in January 2001.

Lies

In his testimony, Estrada also said the charges that he had amassed about P4 billion from illegal gambling payoffs, tax kickbacks and commissions were lies.

He also denied perjuring himself when he submitted his Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth for 1998.

Government prosecutors had accused Estrada of underreporting his assets.

But Estrada said many of the companies where he had shares were either already closed because of bankruptcy or failed to take off by the time he became President and filed the questioned statement.

"I deny all those charges. I never enriched myself with commissions, kickbacks or any pecuniary benefits. ... I do not own the Jose Velarde account and I did not and never would connive with any person or persons for any illegal purpose or purposes," he told the court.

The trial was adjourned before noon. It will resume on Wednesday.

Killings just part of rise and fall of crime, says PNP

From page A1

ups and downs.

Tough luck, it is now on the upswing. *(Full list of victims on Page A6.)*

"You know, there is a trend in crime. Sometimes it falls, sometimes it goes up ..." Philippine National Police spokesperson Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao said.

When crimes go up, the PNP action is to address "this sudden and temporary rise," Pagdilao said.

"It is a really a fluctuating thing that follows the sine curve," he said, referring to the graph on cyclical behavior.

The unchecked killings of militants have alarmed human rights groups, including the London-based Amnesty International, which said many victims of human rights abuses and even common crimes in the country failed to get redress because of intimidation from people in authority and a weak witness protection system.

In its 2006 world report, AI also said there was such little confidence in authorities to solve human rights violations and other crimes that public tolerance for vigilantism had gained ground in the country.

Pagdilao said a rise in the crime rate did not mean the police had failed in their job.

'Not a perfect world'

"We are not blaming anybody, and I hope people will not also blame the police, because crime fighting is a shared responsibility," he said.

Told that the creation of one task force after another had not stopped the killings, Pagdilao said that was the "dynamics of the system."

"We are not in (a) perfect world. Even in the US, in most advanced countries, there is rise and fall of crime," he said.

At least 220 political activists have been killed since President Macapagal-Arroyo took office in 2001, according to an INQUIRER tally based on its own reports and on reports from militant groups Bayan Muna and Karapatan.

Media help needed

The country's unsavory international image as a dangerous place for journalists also suffered a further blotch earlier this week when radio commentator Fernando Batul was gunned down in Puerto Princesa—the 79th media fatality since democracy was restored in 1986.

Director Isidro Lapena, chief of the PNP directorial staff, asked media groups to sit down with the police to discuss measures to minimize the killings.

The police will also discuss the killings with the Commission on Human Rights, Lapena said.

Citizens' civic duty

Asked about the statement from a CHR official that, no matter who was doing the killing, it was the state's job to protect people's lives and secure their homes, Lapena said: "Giving protection to citizens is the responsibility of government."

"Maybe we can minimize these happenings if everybody will join hands to address this problem, not only the government," he said.

Pagdilao said that going after criminals and maintaining peace was not the job of the police alone. Citizens must also perform their civic duty by helping the police, he said.

I-strike formula

He said the police were studying the possibility of adopting the so-called "one-strike policy" to stop the killings in the same manner it was being implemented to stop "jueteng" or illegal gambling operations.

This would mean that a town or city police chief would be immediately relieved of his command if an activist, journalist or local executive was assassinated in his area.

In its report, the AI said that "implementation of a fair trial and custodial safeguards remained weak, and criminal suspects were at risk of ill-treatment or torture by the PNP during extended periods of 'investigative' detention."

The AI mentioned the case of alleged senior communist rebel Elmer Osila who complained he was tortured during interrogation.

Pimentel's choice

An investigation by the CHR revealed marks on Osila's body consistent with torture, AI said.

"Intimidation, aggravated by a lack of effective witness protection programs, undermined the ability of victims of human rights abuses to gain redress, especially when they were members of poor or marginalized communities," it added.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye called the AI report "unfair."

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. proposed that Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez head the body that would look into the killings of activists.

During the Senate's national budget debate, Pimentel argued that it would be better for a civilian rather than an official with a military background, such as Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, to head such a probe.

Gonzalez cool

"I would be more confident in the ability of a purely civilian bureaucrat, like the secretary of justice, who in his younger days was known for his firm advocacy of human rights. I don't know about now," he added, eliciting chuckles from the audience.

Gonzalez turned down such an idea, saying that Ermita headed the Cabinet security cluster which had jurisdiction over such matter.

Gonzalez also said critics of the administration should not be too hasty in blaming the killings on the military.

"I will not make a prejudgment because these are all stories," he said. *With a report from TJ Burgonio*

Bohol grade school kids get AIDS education

By Christian V. Esguerra

A GROWING NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY pupils in Bohol are getting acquainted with Paulo, a bubbly kid whose father, a seaman, is afflicted with AIDS.

His story is the central theme of *"Ang Bangkang Papel ni Paulo"* (Paulo's Paper Boat), a 23-page storybook that's becoming a favorite reading companion in some of the province's private and public elementary schools.

The AIDS Society of the Philippines has begun integrating the book into the local school system to help educate children on the disease, especially how to deal with people afflicted by it in a compassionate way.

But Dr. Carlos Calica, the society's president, says implementing institutionalized sex education apparently remains a "gray area" despite RA 8504 or the AIDS Law.

"There's still much to be done to really educate the public," he told reporters after a press conference announcing the International AIDS Candlelight Memorial at the Marikina Riverbank on May 26.

In Bohol, he said, his group's storytelling program was slowly receiving "good acceptance" in around 10 public and private elementary schools.

"There you'll see a reversal of roles: children who've been introduced to AIDS through storytelling are sharing the story with their parents and, in the process, educating them," he said.

As of last year, there were 11,168 Filipinos with HIV, according to Aurora Corpus, program manager of the National HIV Sentinel Surveillance System.

Of this number, 1,171 were "men having sex with men," 1,136 male clients of sex workers, 349 injectable drug users, and 286 female sex workers, she said.

The problem with AIDS education can be seen in the relative unpopularity of condoms among high-risk groups such as female sex workers and homosexuals.

Among female sex workers and men having sex with men, only 57 percent and 41 percent, respectively, were using the contraceptive, Corpus said.

Calica said these high-risk groups remained affected by "myths and misconceptions" surrounding the use of condoms. He was referring to complaints that condoms diminish sexual pleasure or break easily.

"They still don't think that once they use condoms, they will be protected," she said.

With Kris Bayos

Bill filed seeking ban on mercury in all RP schools

By Philip C. Tubeza

SMARTING FROM THE MERCURY SPILL THAT downed 11 students in his district last February, Parañaque Rep. Eduardo Zialcita yesterday filed a bill proposing a total ban on mercury in public and private schools.

This developed as experts from the US Environmental Protection Agency arrived last week, with the help of industrialist Lucio Tan, to "clean up" the mercury spill at the St. Andrew's School in Parañaque before the new school year starts next month.

Zialcita filed the proposed "Safe Schools Mercury Reduction Act of 2006" which would prohibit the use, purchase and storage of mercury substance and mercury instruments in all private and public schools and institutions in the country, including thermometers.

"Another unfortunate incident may happen in the future if no legislation is carried out to ban the use of this substance in all schools. This legislation is an important step to protect our children's health from the dangers of mercury pollution and contamination in schools," Zialcita said in a statement.

The proposed bill would ban also from educational institutions "any instrument which contains mercury including, but not limited to, thermometers, barometers, sphygmomanometers and manometers."

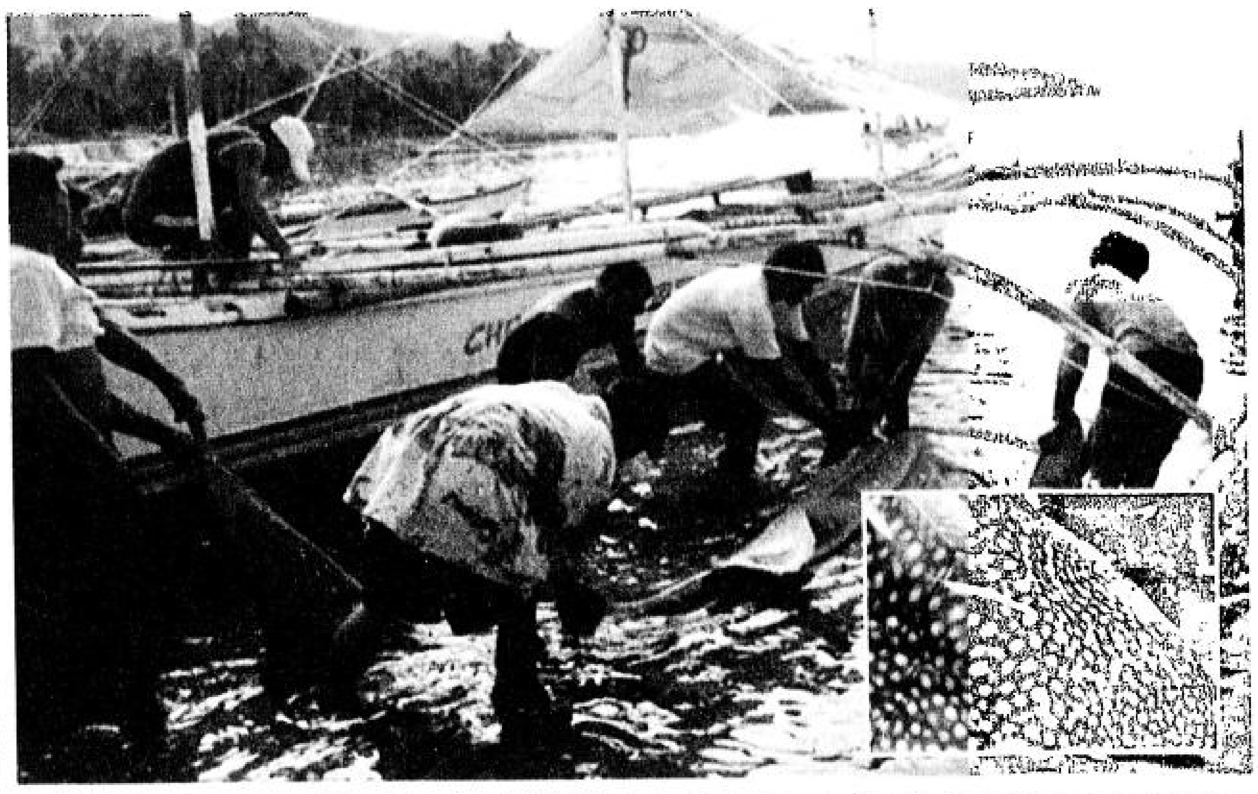
Zialcita noted that environmental experts consider mercury as an extremely toxic substance that can harm human health and wildlife "even at very low levels."

Eleven high school students from St. Andrew's were hospitalized after mercury was accidentally spilled in the school's science laboratory on Feb. 16.

Last week, a team of scientists and experts from the USEPA arrived in Parañaque to assist in the mercury cleanup. The US experts will assist in the validation of mercury substance and vapor. The cleanup was done free of charge by Royal Haskoning, a group of Dutch experts from Netherlands and Philips' contractor Globcare.

Businessman Lucio Tan, a known civic supporter in community service, and Zialcita provided the airfare and hotel accommodations of the American experts through Philippine Airlines and Century Park Sheraton respectively.

Parañaque City Mayor Jun Bernabe has purchased the Lumex machine which will be used in the long term monitoring mercury levels in the school's premises.

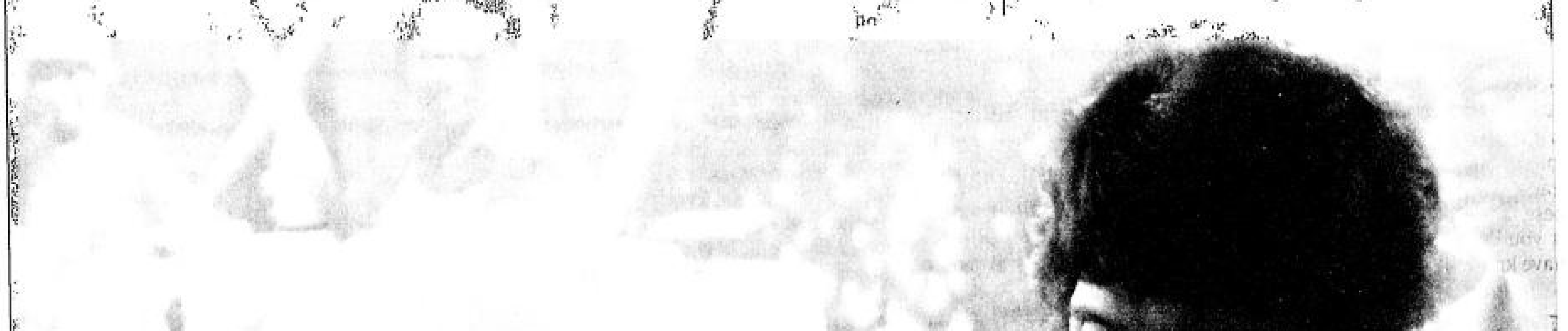


GENTLE WHALE SHARK RIDDLED WITH BULLETS
Legazpi City—A four-meter whale shark weighing a ton known locally as "butanding" was found dead by fishermen at Barangay Borocborocan in Monreal town, Masbate at about 4 a.m. on Tuesday.

The whale shark had 14 bullet wounds in the head from a 9mm rifle and a hack wound (see insert), according to Monreal police. Fisherman Artemio Dejucos said he was about to go home after fishing when his boat accidentally bumped into the creature, which, he said, weighed about a ton. Donsol tourism officer Ofelia Cadag said the butanding would be brought back to Donsol in Sorsogon and would be preserved to remind the public that the gentle creatures such as the whale shark should not be killed but instead protected.

The Butanding Interaction Officers condemned the killing of the whale shark, saying their income would decrease because of such killing.

MICHAEL JAUCIAN, PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2006

ISSN 0116-2642

INQUIRER

Vol. 21 No. 166

OPINION

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

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The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
•Subscription Hotline 896-6000

Have gun, will cover?

EDITORIAL

UNABLE TO STEM THE TIDE OF MURDERS OF media people, the Arroyo administration is now suggesting that journalists do the job themselves. Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the government would allow legitimate journalists to carry firearms if they wanted to do so. He said administration officials arrived at this solution during a meeting in Malacañang where the issue of media murders was discussed. The reason, he said, was that "you cannot watch every criminal at every corner."

Gonzalez made this disclosure the day after motorcyle-riding assassins shot to death Fernando Batul, a radio commentator in Puerto Princesa City on Monday morning as he was driving to work. He was hit 12 times in various parts of his body. Batul, a former city vice mayor, had been receiving death threats on account of his hard-hitting commentaries on local politics, his relatives said.

Batul's death brought to 79 the number of journalists killed since the Marcos dictatorship was dismantled in 1986, according to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines. He was also the 42nd journalist killed since 2000, when President Macapagal-Arroyo first took office, and the 10th this year.

Various local and international media organizations have condemned the killings and demanded that government take strong measures to bring the perpetrators to justice and to protect Filipino journalists. The Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontières has categorized the Philippines as the second most dangerous country for journalists next only to Iraq.

But even this doesn't capture the whole story, since the rankings are apparently based on the body count. Many of the victims in Iraq were part of the "collateral damage" of the war there. Here, each and every victim was specifically targeted for execution. And this, to us, makes the Philippines a more inhospitable place for journalists.

Administration officials, however, have always pointed out that many of the Filipino journalists killed had also engaged in other trades or professions, implying that there were reasons for their deaths other than their news reports or commentaries. "There are media men killed in drinking sprees or because of a woman," Gonzalez said.

True. But maybe Gonzalez can say exactly how many among the 79 journalists were killed for reasons than the practice of their profession? A dozen? A third of the total? Even if only a handful have been killed on account of their stories or opinions, that number is still too many for a country that claims to be a democracy and professes to respect and guarantee freedom of the press. And before Gonzalez forgets, every one of these journalists—whether legitimate or *hao shiao,* as he calls them—ended up dead.

But then safeguarding our freedoms is obviously not an administration priority. In fact, as its moves during the uneasy days of February showed, it would prefer to curtail such freedoms, especially when it feels that its survival is threatened. No wonder, most of these cases have remained unsolved to this day, and now it wants journalists to carry the burden of protecting themselves.

Gonzalez said that instead of blaming the government, those in media should just say what they want it to do. "Do they want to get bodyguards?" he demanded. "Do they want to carry firearms?"

The administration wants journalists to get guns for their own protection? What about other groups who feel threatened, will the government let them arm themselves, too? Where will the arms race end—when everyone is six feet under?

What media people want from the government is nothing more than what every citizen is entitled to: protection of their right to life, liberty, property and the free pursuit of their profession—and swift redress when they are deprived of any of these. The last time we looked, these were the most basic responsibilities of government and, indeed, its reason for being. If henceforth each man must look out for himself, as the administration proposes, what is there left for government to do?

Telling journalists to protect themselves amid the spate of media murders is a clear admission of failure and helplessness on the part of government. Those in media have even more reason to be afraid.

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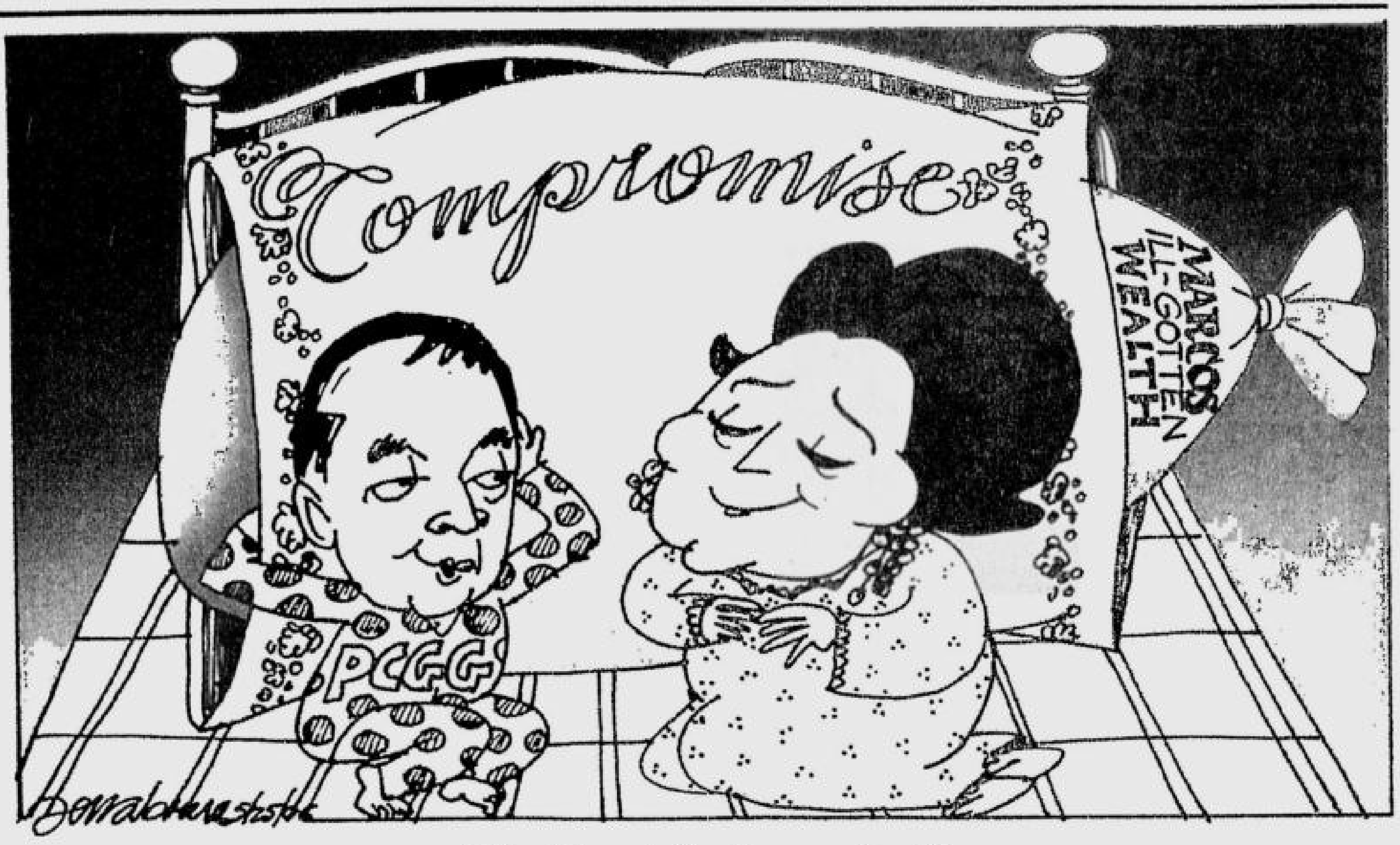
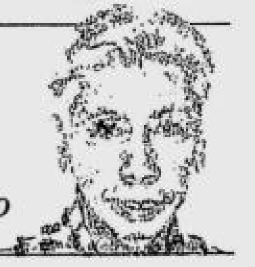


Hottest 'pinpoint'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



THE HOTTEST "BIO-DIVERSITY HOTSPOT" in the country could well be a pinpoint, 30 meters by 30 meters, alongside one of Cebu's more picturesque waterfalls.

"In this needle spot in Kawasan Nature Park, five threatened species of the highest diversity value, were bunched up—only on one of the river's bank," observes University of San Carlos' Franz Seidenschwarz. "The magic of it all is this unique pinpoint looks similar to other stretches along the river. Nothing seems special. And yet, it is the hottest bio-diversity hotspot on Cebu island, perhaps in the entire Philippines."

In Kawasan, Dr. Ernest Krach, for example, found a very rare algae: *batrachospermum*. No other Philippine town has it. Japan is the only other place in the world where it grows—in Miyako's Nu-gusuku-ga springs.

Kawasan at Matutinao, Badian, is 120 kilometers south of Cebu City. *Matud nila tin-aw* means "they say it's very clear"—a reference to the water's sparkling purity.

The valley is one of a denuded province's last habitats. It holds rare birds, including bee-eaters, hornbills, kingfishers. At least 10 pairs of the endangered black shama (*copsycus cebuensis*) were seen. "This thrushbird is found only in Cebu, nowhere else," USC studies show. Highly endangered trees, like *ipil* (*instia bijuga*) and *tugas* (*vitex parviflora*) among others, flourish.

But in 1989, a mini-hydropower plant threatened to wreck the falls and valley's tropical ravine forest. And few paid attention when then-power firm manager Fr. Francisco Silva and engineer Lutz Scholz of Germany's aid agency GTZ decisively redrew the plans.

Their revised plans conserved the falls by staggered operating hours. It integrated a nature park component. The park dammed up intrusion into the valley's vegetation. Guidelines for construction were drawn to protect wildlife.

What emerged, when the turbines first turned, on May 31, 1990, was an eco-friendly hydropower plant. It serves tourists. Its conserved bio-diversity trove draws scientists from Silliman and other universities abroad.

"Bio-diversity" refers to the full abundance of plant, animal and microbial life and ecosystems where these species interlock. Their unique genes are building blocks of life. High-yielding rice, for example, is spliced from different genes. So are hybrid livestock. Medicine against AIDS or cancer comes from plants.

Oxford University's Norman Myers led scientists, in the early 1980s, in warning against the spiraling loss of plant and animal species. When species go extinct, so do their unique genes. It forecloses options for the future.

Myers also helped identify a series of "hotspots" worldwide. Among the five "hottest of the hotspots" pinpointed was the Philippines.

There is also the "accident" of history. The Philippines, Taiwan, Borneo and Sulawesi are separated by deep-sea trenches. Over millions of years, these trenches have resulted in a very high degree of endemism, i.e. many species occur only in this region.

Of the almost 400 species of birds in the Philippines, 44 percent are endemic. For mammals, it's 64 percent, and 70 percent for reptiles. Thus, more than half of the country's bio-diversity is found nowhere else in the world.

Fourteen years after the Kawasan hydro-plant-cum-nature-park started, the San Carlos Botany Research Group resurveyed the area. Among its conclusions were:

There's been substantial re-growth of trees, mostly indigenous species, along Kawasan River. The initial rapid conversion of riverside vegetation into cottage areas is now balanced.

"Valley inhabitants generate substantial income from tourism. The power company is following agreements to maintain natural water flow to preserve the waterfalls."

The nature park approach "assured the survival of species that were not even known at the onset of the project... Several very rare endemic species were discovered in the following years."

Three damselfly species, all endemic to Cebu, were discovered in August 1999 and February 2001. The three are now scientifically catalogued, the latest being the Kawasan mosquito hawk (*protostica plicata*). The Kawasan paper kite butterfly was named after the renowned Cebu-lepidopterist, Julian Jumalon.

"The new findings were surprising," the report notes. "It was thought that all species of forest dwelling damselflies would have already been extinct in Cebu because of the massive loss of forest cover.

"These species are very endangered. Without the nature park concept, they would have vanished without even being discovered."

And that's precisely what happened 50 km up the road, at the Mantayupan Falls in Barili. There, a mini-hydropower plant was built with little regard for the falls and the surroundings. "Go, live in Africa," then Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia taunted green groups.

Today, his daughter, Gov. Gwen Garcia, is revisiting a project that has wrecked the falls and the surroundings. It is one of those little ironies of history.

But it will be too late for some species. "We may never know what we lost," Seidenschwarz observes.

At San Carlos University, he is finalizing a book on the issue. To come off the press later this year is "The Rare and the Vanishing: Cebu's Special Plants and Animals." The book will document the threatened plant and animal species of an island that markedly differs from those of its neighbors.

"There is no mechanism that can recall them from extinction," Seidenschwarz says.

* * *

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When are we going to get angry at this?

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

NORBERTO GONZALES SAYS IT'S NOT GOVernment assets that are assassinating the leftists, it's the leftists themselves. As proof of that, he says, mass graves have been unearthed in San Fernando, Bukidnon, containing the skeletal remains of people believed to have been communists executed by their comrades in purges. His conclusion on the ongoing wholesale murder of Bayan Muna members: Don't look at us, look at them.

What an idiotic thing to say. No, what an idiotic and vicious thing to say. It not only condones murderous injury, it adds malignant insult to it. It adds whole new dimensions to Newspeak, the official language of the current fake government, the two Gonzalezes, Norberto and Raul, being its foremost practitioners. No, being its foremost incarnations, Norberto being the national security adviser and Raul being the justice secretary. Can any Filipino ever feel secure and happy having Norberto to secure his security and Raul to give him justice? Indeed, this explanation about the slaughter coming from a national security adviser who could not explain how he managed to compromise the country's security by getting into a deal with Venable to lobby the US Congress to fund Charter change adds whole new dimensions to lying.

I know about the "killing fields." I know that in the 1970s and 1980s, the communist movement, in fits of paranoia, tried to purge its ranks of suspected spies and massacred scores of its comrades in the process. Many of the victims turned out to be innocent, but the carnage spread because, under unbearable torture, they pointed to just about anyone they could point to in hopes of escaping their fate. They succeeded only in bringing other innocent comrades to share it. I know about the "killing fields" because after learning about it in the early 1990s, I railed against it and supported the efforts of the victims, many of whom have banded together to seek redress, to bring its perpetrators to justice.

The last—and worst—of the "killing fields" took place in 1988, after which the communist movement was wracked by dissension and desertion. I personally think that movement suffered its greatest loss in fortune from the "killing fields" rather than anything else. It wasn't the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union that laid it low, though those things pulled out the ideological rug out from under it, dimming its capacity to be a spark of inspiration to idealistic youth, it was the "killing fields" that did. It made a lot of people, above all comrades themselves, wonder what kind of world they were building.

I agree: The authors of that crime ought to be brought to justice. But for the same reason, I demand, as all of us should, that the authors of the ongoing crime, which is the slaughter of leftists and journalists—the latter camp producing its 79th victim only the other day in radio commentator Fernando Batul—now happening with mind-boggling impunity, must be brought to justice.

I applaud the Commission on Human Rights in this respect for demanding so, saying the government must be held accountable for these deaths, whether or not policemen and soldiers were responsible for them. The government has the duty to protect the rights of the citizens, chief of those rights being the citizens' right to continue breathing. And as it is, there is every reason to suppose policemen and soldiers are responsible for them. "The pattern of complaints that has come to us points to the Armed Forces and PNP as suspects," says CHR Chair Purificacion Quisumbing. Thank God that, like the Supreme Court, the CHR has rediscovered its true calling, seeing truth amid the tangle of lies, seeing light amid the darkness that has fallen on this country.

But none of that will matter unless it finds a loud echo in public opinion. Laws are only as good as there is public zeal to enforce them; the rights to life, liberty and happiness are only as good as there is public will to demand to have them.

Which brings me to ask: When are we going to get angry at this? When are we going to rouse from our stupor to smell the stench of death and cry out to heaven, "Stop this foulness!"? I know that people who wreak mayhem upon their comrades as a result of differences in beliefs cannot be the most sympathetic creatures on earth. I know that people who do not particularly show a deep-seated respect for the sacredness of human life cannot be the most respectable creatures on earth. But you do not have to like them to be alarmed by the iniquity that is the wholesale murder of them. You do not have to like them to protest the obscenity that is the systematic obliteration of them.

That is so for the most elemental of reasons. That is, that in the end the iniquity is not just being done to them, it is it being done to us. The obscenity is not just being wrought upon them, it is being wrought upon us. The victim of this crime isn't just Bayan Muna, it is Inang Bayan.

This is a case where John Donne's words, "Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee," can be taken literally. The day we keep silent in the face of this evil is the day we dig a hole for democracy. The day we turn away from the spectacle of this evil is the day we roll out the welcome mat for tyranny. The day we agree to people being murdered wantonly in the belief that "they are not us and it will never happen to us" is the day we make certain that it will happen to us. All it takes for the Nazis to annihilate the world was to agree that they annihilate the Jews. Or as we chanted like a mantra during Marcos' time, all it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.

The madness has gone on long enough. When are we going to get angry at it?

Lack of 'delicadeza'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I'M NOT ENTIRELY UNSYMPATHETIC TO THE idea of PCGG Commissioner Ricardo Abcede to strike a compromise with the Marcoses on the recovery of their hidden wealth. I find it quite unfair to put on the PCGG the entire onus of blame for the government's failure to recover this wealth fully, when there are other factors that caused the delay. There's our judicial system: Judges and Justices might have been bought or have succumbed to the machinations of Imelda Marcos' smart lawyers to delay the cases for three decades. There are the corrupt personnel of the PCGG who are said to have sold documents stolen from the files. And there's the wishy-washy policy of various administrations.

But where Abcede is to be faulted is his lack of *delicadeza* in inviting to his birthday party the central figure in the PCGG's battle to recover the Marcos wealth. Perhaps Imelda Marcos just dropped by casually, as she has been reputed to do in the past. If that were the case, Abcede should have sent her away, explaining the delicateness of his situation. It was poor taste at the very least, and perhaps even immoral at worst.

* * *

With so many distinguished African leaders blowing into town, I found myself running to the world map. Recently Speaker Jose de Venecia hosted a dinner for Equatorial Guinea President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, where the latter was decorated with the Congressional Medal of Achievement. That occasion enabled me to learn how Obiang, a professional soldier who took over in 1979 from a dictator relative, developed close ties with RP. One reason is our common Hispanic colonial past, though RP was under Spain for 200 years more. Interestingly, Guineans speak Spanish as an official language, whereas the language has been virtually obliterated here. Then, too, Guinea is host to 3,000 Pinoy contract workers most of whom are employed by the giant American construction and engineering company, Bechtel, the major contractor for its liquefied natural gas project. Other Pinoys work for the Philippine Bank of Commerce which provides technical assistance to Guinea's National Bank. But the country holds many more opportunities for bilateral cooperation in the field of energy, tourism, telecommunications, agriculture and fisheries. It's No. 3 in oil production in Africa, next to Nigeria and Angola, and its human resources are still undeveloped. JDV was happy that President Obiang is opening up oil and gas exploration to RP companies. While flying the visitor to Pangasinan, he also pushed for 25 varieties of fish that could be made available to the African country.

I also learned that the country supported RP's bid for a non-permanent seat in the UN's Security Council, which GMA chaired at the 60th anniversary of the UN last September. At the dinner, JDV cited this cooperation as reminiscent of the historic "Bandung Spirit" of Afro-Asian partnership in the 1950s.

* * *

I wrote earlier that a high point of the 31st Unesco-International Theater Institute World Conference is the interaction of heavenly voices from our Loboc Choir from Bohol and Mexico's famed Chimalli Choir. We had a sampling during the President's dinner for the delegates, led by Unesco Director General Koichiro Matsuura. Though they had only one rehearsal, the Mexican angels succeeded in memorizing a Filipino song and, in turn, the Pinoy kids sang "Mil Amores" with them. After GMA led the guests out of Heroes' Hall, some of us lingered on and we were amply rewarded with an impromptu concert by the two choirs. The Mexican kids were poised and polished; one young girl even got Foreign Secretary Bert Romulo to dance a few steps with her. Our Loboc kids, by contrast, seemed very shy.

Thanks to Cecile Alvarez, the World Congress is past the halfway mark and going well despite some kinks. The delegates have been quite taken by the beauty of our country and the friendliness of our people. I have been feasting on the cultural fare offered every evening by drama groups from various countries. I was particularly impressed by the soliloquy in English by beautiful Lithuanian actress Birute Mar, based on a contemporary Arab play called "Last Night," about a young girl whose love for her fiancé is being stifled by a domineering father. The brief drama lays bare problems of women's emancipation, freedom and democracy. Catch Birute again this Sunday at 10 a.m. at the CCP as she plays Sophocles' tragic character, Antigone.

* * *

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza has come under attack from some quarters for the city government's decision to ban the controversial "The Da Vinci Code" in all theaters. He called me up to stress that the decision was not his alone but a unanimous resolution of the entire City Council. He said that as mayor, he has the duty to defend the religious beliefs and practices of everyone, and the movie trivializes the beliefs of Christians and Catholics when it portrays Christ as having carnal relations with Mary Magdalene and claims He never rose from the dead. Atienza said he would fight for the Muslim population as well if a movie or book would assail their religious beliefs, too. I see his point.

* * *

Retrouvaille Philippines, the worldwide ministry dedicated to helping troubled marriages, once again offers its weekend healing program from Friday evening, June 2, to Sunday afternoon, June 4, at the Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center along SVD Road, Tagaytay City. Retrouvaille has helped many married couples rebuild failing or even antagonistic relationships, and has even brought together separated couples or those who have stopped communicating. For particulars about this Retrouvaille weekend, call Fr. Dave Clay at 0918-9020511 and 523-3361 and 525-0308, or Ding and Belen at 0916-573-0097 or 776-4413, or Nes and Inday at 0916-4438346 or 938-9719. All calls are treated as confidential.

Culion: The nuns' story (2)

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

THIS MONTH AND YEAR, CULION ISLAND IN Palawan marks its 100th anniversary as a place where lepers of yore were shipped and confined for most of their lives.

Culion, once the biggest leper colony in the world, is a leper colony no more. It is now a thriving island municipality. The new generation no longer bears the marks of the dreaded disease that medical science has finally licked. The scars are still there, but the place and its people have long begun the journey toward healing.

I was one of those who helped write the handsome coffee-table book "Culion Island: A Leper Colony's 100-Year Journey Toward Healing." Here is the continuation of the excerpts from "The Nuns' Story," one of the pieces that I wrote.

* * *

Newly arrived nuns reacted with the same fear. Sr. Maria Luisa Montenegro remembered her first day in 1940:

"My first day was a scary one. There was a patient whose earlobes were so long they touched his shoulders. He had no nose, only two holes on his face, and no fingers, only the palms of his hands. The other patients were in different stages of deformity. In spite of their handicap, they managed to feed themselves with the help of the nursing aide who tied the spoon to their fingerless palms."

As soon as the children were of school age, they were given back to their parents whose homes were within the confines of the leprosarium. Having been used to the antiseptic surroundings in the nursery, many children had adjustment problems in their parents' homes. Those whose parents were incapable of caring for them were placed at the Santa Teresita Dormitory. In 1936, through the efforts of Fr. Hugh McNutty, SJ, the Culion Catholic School was founded so the children could study.

When World War II broke out in December 1941, 22 sisters were working in Culion. Dr. Casimiro B. Lara, its director, was in Manila for a meeting at that time. Invading Japanese soldiers waylaid the food supplies at sea. Because the sanitarium could no longer support all the sisters, the acting director, Dr. Jose Nolasco, asked Sr. Damien Lelievre, the superior then, to send 12 of the sisters back to Manila. Recalled Sr. Ma. Luisa Montenegro:

"When the boat arrived, the sisters pleaded to remain. But Dr. Nolasco was adamant. Mother Damien asked for volunteers to return to Manila. Nobody raised her hand, so I raised mine, though my heart was not willing.

"After finishing a nursing course, I returned to Culion in 1950. Working in the clinic was sometimes very amusing. Once a patient came to see Dr. Armando Paras who prescribed Diazone. On hearing the name of the medicine, the patient said, "Doctor, I don't want to die yet." He thought he heard "die soon."

The sisters' work extended beyond Culion. They sent daughters of patients to their St. Paul schools all over the Philippines on full college scholarships. Many were adopted by good families. Education was to be these girls' ticket to a new life. But a good number have come back to Culion to work for their own people.

In the Saint Paul archives are first-person accounts of the valiant nuns who were part of Culion's history. One of the most admired was Mother Damien Lelievre, namesake of the saintly Father Damien "the leper" of Molokai. Her sole burning desire as a young nun in France was to work with the lepers and to die among them. The "frail little nun" loved the patients so much she thought nothing of handling their sores without gloves. To admonitions, she would respond: "If I die, I die."

Like Mother Damien, Sr. Antoinette joined the St. Paul Sisters precisely because "I wanted to work among the lepers."

Her Culion experience, Sr. Antoinette said, added much breadth to her outlook as a religious. But even as she later took on various tasks, Culion always remained in her heart. "I never had difficulty adjusting in Culion. I was new there when I met this man who was a patient. I held out my hand to shake his hand but he immediately withdrew. People were hesitant to invite us inside their homes. Once, I passed by a house and I asked if I could come in. The woman by the window was surprised. She let me in and pointed to a chair for me to sit on. 'That chair is for the *sano* (healthy),' she said."

Sr. Hipolita Collado was a novice when she first set foot on Culion. "I had this experience that I never forgot and I swore then that I would never come back." Many years later, she came back to be the superior.

Several sisters who had worked in Culion received government recognition. Sr. Calixte Christen was awarded a gold medal for her 20 years of service. Governor General Leonard Wood, his wife and daughter went to Culion to honor her. Also honored later was Sr. Marie du Bon Pasteur. Sr. Marie Damien received a medal of honor from President Elpidio Quirino in 1949.

Not one Sister became infected with leprosy while in Culion.

Among the Culion brave hearts—the oldest surviving but sprightly sisters who had served in Culion before and after World War II—are: Sisters Mary Cyprian Montevirgen, 92; Gregoire de Leon, 91; Mary Michaela Diad, 87; and Barthelemy Gracia, 94. All are nurses.

Since that day in May 1906, the work of the SPC Sisters in Culion has gone on without ceasing. In war and in peace, through stormy nights and sunny days, the island that was at once a fortress that held what were then called "the living dead" was also a test for the nuns' strength and endurance. Their continued presence is a sign of God's grace and proof of these women's faith. Like the ancient lighthouse that still stands there on a rock by the sea, their mission has withstood the test of time.

* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Dead tomorrow

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

I MET FERNANDO "DONG" BATUL ONLY ONCE, and briefly. I was in Puerto Princesa City to speak at a forum. He was there. He invited me and an economist, who was with our group, to be guests on his radio show. We went; we were interviewed; the whole thing lasted about an hour. We discussed why we were at the forum (to talk about the national situation with members of various NGOs), moving on to other concerns, such as the implications of opening up Palawan to mining operations.

As all AM radio programs tend to be, Batul's show was blunt with his and his listeners' opinions. He was, however, generally a pleasant person, fairly tall and self-assured, with a media man-turned-politician's fluency and penchant for the pungent phrase. He told me (as most politicians do) that what he was doing was a hassle, but that it had to be done, after all, he was an ordinary person and wanted to stand up for ordinary folk. I've met and listened to many people like him. I've also taken part in quite a few shows like his; I've also listened to the give-and-take and the banter between young leaders like himself and the public in those shows.

He was proud of the fact that he'd been elected vice mayor of Puerto Princesa City in 2004, though kicked out of office following an election protest. It was obvious that he considered his opponent as the evil one, and himself as the aggrieved party. Equally obvious, he was open to the idea of a political comeback; and his show (as most public affairs programs often are), like himself (as all other people in the political wilderness always are), was devoted to what we Filipinos like to call "fiscalizing."

Last month, according to the papers, someone threw a grenade at Batul's house: two weeks before that, he'd apparently interviewed a local leader of the New People's Army on his show. A note accompanied the grenade: "It kills to be too talkative."

On May 22, on his way to his show, Batul was shot dead in his vehicle, 50 meters from the radio station. The assassins were on a motorcycle. He was hit 12 times with a .45-caliber revolver: four bullets in the face, four in the chest, three in the back and one in the side, according to the police.

The rituals of feigned official interest ensued. Dramatic calls for action were made. Batul's political opponents took the lead in denouncing his murder. An impressive reward was put forward. The investigation was given a 48-hour deadline.

Will anything come out of the drama? It's always a tricky business trying to make predictions. But consider the case of a publisher who was shot in Aurora Province on May 10, 2005. The chief suspect in the case, the mayor of Dingalan town, didn't surrender until an hour before a warrant was to be issued for his arrest—on May 22 of this year (the same day that Batul was shot).

At the very least, in Batul's case, once again, the wheels of justice will grind slowly, if at all. The killings of journalists have reached world-alarming proportions. Batul is the 79th journalist killed in the Philippines since 1986, when Ferdinand Marcos went into exile and the country regained press freedom. It isn't an encouraging record, and it doesn't speak highly of the country's so-called freedom of expression, or right to information.

I didn't talk to Batul long enough to dispel the superficial impression that he was a run-of-the mill politician engaged in a run-of-the-mill effort to make a name for himself. I do know that he was neither better nor worse than many of his brethren in the professions of journalism and politics. Certainly, I didn't hear or see anything during the time I talked to him, or participated in his show, that set him apart from his peers. Nothing worth killing him for; and even if he did interview a communist guerrilla on his show—well, one can either turn a blind eye to reality, or turn the public's attention to it.

Anyway, he is dead: the latest of grim statistics. And he is a subset in a set of even grimmer statistics: since President Macapagal-Arroyo took office in 2001, anywhere from 566 to 601 political activists have been killed; from 2005 to March of this year alone, 143 have been killed. These were people whose political beliefs could be considered radical, and who belonged to a political minority, and who might have been even dangerous to the State. But they weren't fighting in the hills; they were out in the open, in organized, legitimate political parties and movements.

Like the murdered journalists, they were ambushed and killed for no reason other than what they stood for and said. Consider that no journalist identified to be supportive of the present administration has suffered a similar fate; the politicians and organizers of the ruling parties have similarly been free of harm. Organizations of journalists from around the world have expressed concern over the killing of journalists, and human rights groups have expressed alarm over the political killings. The government counters that the communists may be killing their own—and their rivals, too. Which is beside the point, even if true.

Fernando Batul was only 37, a year older than me, when he was killed. When we met, he asked me, both on and off the air, if I was interested in entering politics. I told him I wasn't. He replied, "But you have all the advantages."

I said, "So what?"

"Well, I got this far without any advantages," he answered laughing.

To which I responded, "So you see? The future belongs to you."

But that future is now gone for him, as it is for so many others.

$300,000, anyone?

I FINISHED COLLEGE THE OTHER SATURDAY. I WAS swarmed with messages saying "congratulations" or "I'm so proud of you." Some friends just shook my hand and, as if they had nothing else to say, just asked me, "So how does it feel to finally graduate?" I answered them with a smile and said, "Oh, it feels great! It's exciting to know the feeling of being unemployed!"

They thought I was joking, and so they laughed, gave me a pat on back and told me not to worry because I would soon be a registered nurse and go abroad and find greener pastures. They went on to say something about the big salary I would be earning as a nurse and the benefits my family would surely get from it. They also brought up the issue of doctors becoming nurses. And finally, they advised me against getting married or even having a boyfriend until I was abroad.

YOUNG BLOOD

Philinne Floranne M. Garcia

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I have heard so many versions of these for four years now. This thing about instant wealth was used by my parents to convince me to go into nursing. To someone who repeats this, it might look as if I am hearing it for the first time, I am really fed up and I feel like finishing their statements. It is only because I don't want to sound disrespectful that I put up this façade, an art that I have mastered after many years of listening and listening to the same thing. Sometimes, I just want to make a list of the salaries nurses are supposed to earn in different countries and the types of cars they can expect to own as well as the different nationalities of their probable spouses. This would help those who are trying to help me decide. Perhaps then, they won't make a mistake in telling me in which country I would earn $300,000 a year.

It's amazing how people who didn't take up nursing can be very interested in a nurse's salary. Once they have an idea of the amount, they announce it to the whole world to convince others to take up the course. My grandmother's friends, my mother's officemates and even our high school registrar told me many stories about nurses and always concluded that I should not think twice about going into nursing.

But did they ever consider what I have to go through before I would enjoy the so-called greener pastures? Did they know how many bacteria and viruses will enter my respiratory system before I qualify to work abroad? How many bullets and tumors have to be taken out of human bodies with my assistance? Or how many last breaths I will witness? Don't they realize how much I have to sacrifice to earn such fabulous salaries, like leaving my family? I bet they don't, but they pretend that they do.

At a small gathering after our Nursing Ceremony, the one where they gave us our college rings and pins, there was an old man who talked about nursing so much that he sounded like a brochure. He lectured on the "beauty" of being a nurse, which of course focused on the big salary. He ended his one-and-a-half-hour speech with a big smile and an approving remark: "You made an excellent choice!"

His statement floated in my mind for a long time. It clashed with my idea that choosing nursing was one of the biggest mistakes of my life. It took me days to finally accept that, yes, he was right! But what made nursing an excellent choice for me was not the salary I will get, it was the experience I had as a nursing student.

It was an experience which was way too different from the experiences of students taking other courses. When they got together, they would talk about the low grades they got in their quizzes, the difficulty they encountered studying numbers or the thrill of analyzing chemicals in the laboratory. When I talked about my experience, I talked about the patients I handled. I talked about their condition, their story, their experience. I talked about life!

And that is what makes me different from them. It's because I deal with life and I have the rare chance of seeing life like the other students never see it. In my world, there is no room for mistakes unlike theirs where they can easily crumple the piece of paper with their wrong answers or make fresh calculations or take make-up quizzes in order to pass a subject. They will never know when a person is in pain through reading books or calculating, but a nurse does.

And this is because a nurse does more than read and calculate. A nurse produces more than a computer program or a graded thesis. A nurse gives his/her own self to the people around. A nurse gives humane care to people, to life! And I believe that is reason enough for me to accept that, indeed, being a nurse is an excellent choice.

So why don't some well-meaning people, who are trying to help students make up their minds, just tell them: "Hey! Why don't you take up nursing so you will have rich experiences that will help you make good judgments in life" or "You should take up nursing because it is a rare opportunity to take care of the most wonderful gift God gave us"? I suppose it is too difficult for them to let these words escape their mouths because people might laugh at them since the words sound so godly, so just, so humane, so good, so true. On the other hand, why do they have to bribe them with the big salary? For practicality's sake, I know, or perhaps it is just their way of saying, "Go earn big money so you can help me escape from poverty."

Being a nurse is not just about money. It is about carrying a big responsibility in nurturing the profession as a never-ending fountain of experiences that will make a person appreciate life even more.

Philinne Floranne M. Garcia, 20, finished her nursing degree at the Ateneo de Davao University.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Beyond politics

"You cannot inject politics in everything that (President) Gloria (Macapagal-Arroyo) does. This is an issue that deserves bipartisan support."

—Sen. Joker Arroyo on the President's move asking Congress to pass a law abolishing the death penalty

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CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF THE : REGISTRATION OF SECURITIES
SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION :
(Registrant) :
x------------------------x

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that on 09 March 2006, a sworn registration statement was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission for and on behalf of SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION (SMC) for the registration of up to THREE HUNDRED MILLION (P300,000,000.00) worth of payables owning from SMC to its suppliers (the "SMEs/Supplier Receivables") which will be traded in the Marketplace for SMEs/Suppliers Receivables Purchases ("M4SME-RP), an alternative trading system owned and operated by the Development Bank of the Philippines. Although SMC is the issuer of the SMEs/Suppliers Receivables, it will not be the selling entity. Rather, it will be the suppliers (through the Trustee) who will be selling the payables when first traded in the M4SME-RP. No part of the proceeds of the sales or trading of payables in M4SME-RP will go to SMC. SMC is only participating in M4SME-RP solely to assist in the financing requirements of its suppliers, and in support of the government's effort to spur growth in the SME sector.

Said registration statement and other papers/documents attached thereto are open to inspection by interested parties during business hours, and copies thereof, photostatic or otherwise, shall be furnished to every party at such reasonable fees as the Commission may prescribe.

(Sgd.) **JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN**
Director

(PDI–May 25 & June 2, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines
Municipality of Bonifacio
Province of Misamis Occidental

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Date: May 24, 2006
Contract ID No.: SP-083-IN-01
World Bank Loan No: 4446PH

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of Local Government Finance and Development and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for the *Construction of Seashore Protection at Barangay Migpangi, Bonifacio, Misamis Occidental.* Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The *Municipality of Bonifacio, Misamis Occidental* invites sealed bids from eligible sources for the *Construction of Seashore Protection at Barangay Migpangi, Misamis Occidental consists of Construction of 770 L.M. composed of Structure Excavation, Grouted Riprap, Mortar Facing, Boulder Fill, Handlaid Rock Embankment, Crushed Aggregate Base Course, Portland Cement Concrete Pavement (PCCP), Reinforced Concrete Sheet Piles and 3-units Reinforced Concrete Box Culvert (RCBC).*
3. Bidding documents may be purchased starting *May 24, 2006 – June 28, 2006 during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Municipal Session Hall, Bonifacio, Misamis Occidental* upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *Six Thousand Five Hundred Pesos only (Php. 6,500.00)* or its equivalent in a freely-convertible currency, for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of *ninety (90) days* after bid opening and must be accompanied by bid security of *Nine Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Pesos Only (Php. 975,000.00)* in a form of cash, certified check, bank guarantee or its equivalent in a convertible currency and shall be delivered to the *Office of the Secretariat, Bids & Awards Committee (BAC), Municipal Session Hall, Bonifacio, Misamis Occidental on or before June 28, 2006 at 10:00 A.M.* at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.
5. A pre-bid conference will be held on *June 13, 2006 at 9:00 A.M. at the Municipal Hall of Bonifacio, Misamis Occidental.*

(Sgd.) RAUL T. LUMBATAN
BAC Chairman

(PDI–May 25, 2006)

Best way to honor our Mt. Everest conquerors

WHEN LEO ORACION, PASTOR Emata and Romi Garduce come home, a heroes' welcome awaits them. And they deserve it, indeed because reaching the peak of Mt. Everest is no easy feat.

But they deserve more than a heroes' welcome. They would be honored best if the Arroyo administration seriously looks into the plight of our athletes. I remember that, about two years ago, a marathon athlete, who could not get a subsidy/allowance from the Philippine Sports Commission, committed suicide because he was so embittered by his inability to provide for his family.

The three Filipino Everest conquerors have earned for the country worldwide respect and admiration. Somehow, they have made the world forget, even if only for a short time, that the country is the second most dangerous country for journalists and for labor union members. These men risked their lives, in the process exemplifying the conviction and potential for greatness of the Filipino people.

I hope they wouldn't be used by those who do not deserve to share in their triumph, specifically the corrupt and immoral people in government, for self-glorification and image-boosting.

—JEFFERSON BALISTOY,
Liga ng Kabataang Moro
(LKM-Manila),
Salam Mosque Compound,
Barangay Culiat,
Tandang Sora, Quezon City

Focus on economy, not on presidency

EVERYONE IN THIS COUNTRY wants to see a narrower gap between the rich and the poor. This doesn't need an economist to see. But this is easier said than done.

Whatever a genius leader shall do to lessen this gap should show the macroeconomic indicators that our economic planners want to see, like reduced budget deficit, stronger peso, export and import figures, stock exchange index, increased foreign reserves, increased foreign investments, etc.

These things should happen first before the benefits trickle down to the poor sectors of our society. That is why our leaders are trying to create an environment to achieve these macroeconomic indicators.

I support Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's economic thrusts because I know she knows what this nation needs to do to improve the lives of its citizens.

I challenge the opposition to point out why our current leaders' economic plans are wrong and to offer alternative solutions. This is the one that we should debate on, not Ms Arroyo's presidency. Let her do her job.

—ROMEO YBAÑEZ,
raybanez@yahoo.com

PAL apologizes, explains flight delay necessary to ensure passenger safety

THIS REFERS TO THE COLUMN "PAL always late" (PDI, 5/21/06) where former Justice Isagani A. Cruz related his experience with Philippine Airlines flight PR 853 last May 12, 2006.

First, we must tender Cruz and all other passengers our earnest apologies for the inordinate delay in their flight's departure, which was caused by a malfunction in one of the aircraft's engines. In line with our policy of putting safety first and foremost, we exhausted all means to repair the fault while the aircraft was at the gate.

Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of our maintenance service provider, Lufthansa Technik Philippines (whose president was also a passenger on the flight), the engine could not be repaired where it was, and the aircraft had to be brought to the hangar.

It was then decided to replace the aircraft with the next available unit. All of these took the better part of four hours and we take full responsibility for the inconvenience experienced by our passengers.

This extends as well to the "hardly appetizing" food served to the passengers by one of the restaurants at the terminal contracted by PAL. Regrettably, PAL is constrained by the limited choice of dining concessionaires at the pre-departure area and it has to make do with what is available.

Philippine Airlines always strives to operate flights safely and on time. These two objectives should go hand-in-hand at all times, and airlines throughout the world do their utmost to achieve this ideal. At certain times, however, airlines are faced with the unwelcome choice of either one or the other. In such instances, we at PAL choose to err on the side of caution. We would rather delay the flight than compromise the safety of our passengers and crew.

In any case, we take Cruz's comments seriously and consider them a challenge to do better. Rest assured that we are doing our best to address the concerns raised, and to ensure that they are resolved to the satisfaction of our passengers.

—ROLANDO G. ESTABILLO,
vice president,
Corporate Communications,
Philippine Airlines,
PAL Center, Legazpi Street,
Makati City

Startling showcase of human nobility

THE FRONT-PAGE STORY "Poor mom with rich heart adopts unwanted baby" by Christian V. Esguerra (PDI, 5/11/06), was one pregnant with invaluable lessons. The story of Sally Ruiz—a 58-year-old widow living in a 15-square-meter shanty in Vitas, Tondo and surviving daily with her two children on a P50 budget for food, water and electricity—was a disarming proof of the dynamism of the human spirit over life's vicious hurdles.

Sally could have chosen to not take in Sandin Lee. She was living in Building 3, a place aptly described as a "showcase of the permanence of poverty." Yet, when her family adopted and supported the abandoned Sandin Lee, she followed another logic that converted their subhuman existence to one that is, in essence, more civilized. Their shanty was transformed into a startling "showcase of human nobility."

The caption "There is always room for love" on the photo of Sally lifting up little Sandin Lee showed the logic of Sally's family. Their poverty with its confounding riddles and challenges may seem to have robbed them of their very dignity, but grit and faith in God have lifted them up to overcome these difficulties. They had reasons to frown at life but they chose to smile at it and move on with hope. Sally inspired her two children—Salme and Metilyn who were able to prove that they could support not just "another mouth to feed" but another person in need of love and respect.

To the INQUIRER, many thanks for this story. It truly warms the heart and empowers the spirit. Sally inspired me, too. May we continue to extend effective and fair support to all those who need our help!

—MEL E. MARANAN,
melmaranan@hotmail.com

Liceo U was CDO partner in Unesco cultural initiative

THIS IS TO CLARIFY AN ERRONEOUS picture presented by Belinda Olivares-Cunanan's column, titled "Cultural interaction from around the globe." (PDI, 5/18/06)

Writing about the regional component of the 2006 World Festival of Drama Schools, an exciting component of the Unesco-International Theatre Institute's Biennial Congress currently hosted by the Philippine government under the auspices of Cecile Guidote-Alvarez, Cunanan stated: "Cagayan de Oro City, seat of Xavier University, will receive Romania's National University of Drama and Film, named after I.L. Caragiale, a famous actor."

Xavier University is indeed in Cagayan de Oro City. And it is true that the city is currently hosting Romania's National University of Dramatic Art and Cinematography. However, the partner of Cagayan de Oro City for this cultural interaction is the Liceo de Cagayan University.

Founded in 1955 by the forward-looking Pelaez couple, Rodolfo and Elsa, Liceo U has in recent years been leading the way in community engagement through culture and the arts in Cagayan de Oro. Last year, the university inaugurated the state-of-the-art Rodelsa Hall, the first theater for the performing arts in Mindanao. This coming school year, Liceo U opens a degree program in the performing arts, with specializations in music, dance and theater.

It is lamentable that the efforts of Liceo U—now under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Rafaelita Pelaez-Golez—to pursue cultural initiatives for our community in Northern Mindanao would be so belittled by Cunanan's insensitive sentence.

—NEIL PAGALARAN,
program coordinator,
Office of Cultural
and Public Affairs,
Liceo de Cagayan University,
Rodolfo N. Pelaez Blvd., Carmen,
Cagayan de Oro City 9000

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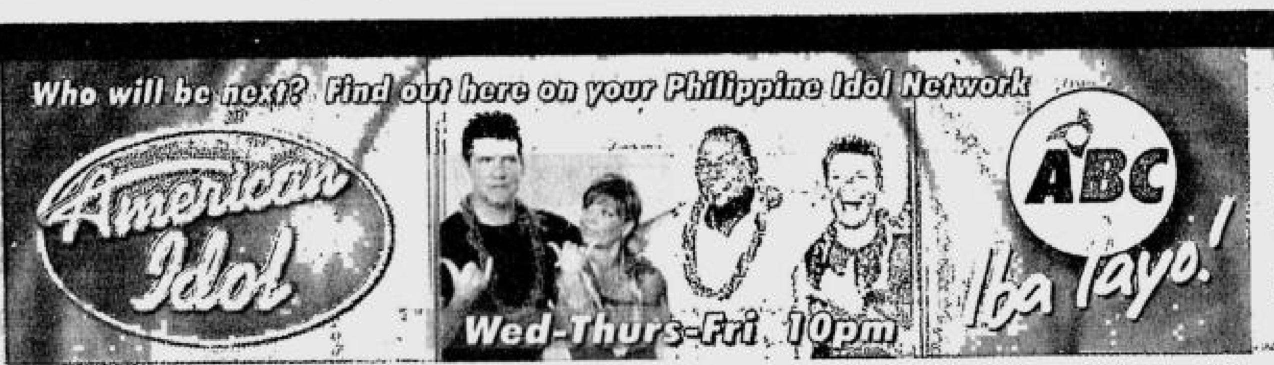
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Thursday, May 25, 2006


Who will be next? Find out here on your Philippine Idol Network
American Idol
Wed-Thurs-Fri 10pm
ABC
Iba Tayo!
ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				National Geographic	Volleyball League				Sentro	Worst Case Scenario	S O S		Wala Yan Sa Lolo Ko		Big News	AI Results Show	Dokyu		
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Outstanding Twins	TV Patrol World		Bituing Walang Ningning	Sa Piling Mo	Pinoy Big Brother	Panday	Wonderful Life	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
AXN		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)		CSI: Miami (Season II)		30 Seconds To Fame	Samsung Sports World	Beastmaster (Season II)		Pensacola (Season III)		Fear Factor (Season V)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Supernatural (Season I)		Hex (Season I)	
Cartoon Network	Police Academy	Richie Rich	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi	Codename: Kids Next Door	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons		Power Rangers Ninja Storm	PokeMon	Yu-Gi-Oh Double Duel		The Simpsons		Mucha Lucha!	Duck Dodgers	Justice League	Samurai Jack
Cinema One		Where Love Has Gone				Bilangin Ang Bituin Sa Langit				Cool Dudes				Gagamboy				La Vida Rosa	
Cinemax	Major Dundee (2:45 PM)				Protocol (4:15 PM)			Fool For Love (6:15 PM)				Implicated			The Italian Job (9:35 PM)				Happy Campers
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	Global Office	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Crossing Jordan		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	North Mission Road	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		What Should You Do?		Cold Case		Prison Break	
Discovery Channel		Weather Extreme		Giant Of The Skies		Animal Face-Off		The Future Is Wild		Extreme Engineering		Mean Machine	Connect	Mythbusters		Giant Of The Skies		Power Zone	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	The Archies In Jug Man			Tutenstein	Lizzie McGuire	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Dinosaur	
ESPN		Pro Billiards '04 Trick Shot Magic NY, USA				X-Games Files '04		Cheerleading UCA All-Star FL USA	Motorsport Asia	2005 Kaohsiung World Pool C'ship				Sportscenter Asia	Pool Snooker World Pool League '04 Poland		Pool Snooker World Pool League '04 Poland		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Veronica Mars 2		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Will & Grace 4	Friends 10	Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Showdog Moms & Dads		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Cenacle Of Divine Mercy	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Virtue Storybook	Truth In The Heart	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	The Sacraments Through The Ages	EWTN Presents		EWTN Live (Encore) With Fr. Mitch Pacwa		Daily Mass Live		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	The Seven Sacraments	Images of Mary	Behold the Man: Spirituality for Men	The Journey Home Encore	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat (2:45 PM)	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Endless Love 1: Autumn In My Heart By Popular Demand		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Gokusan	24 Oras		Extra Challenge	Majika	I Luv NY	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Jewel In The Palace		Magpakailanman			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		Mcleod's Daughters IV		Returning Lily (4:05 PM)				Bewitched	The Nanny	Judging Amy		Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye II		Spooks		Back To You And Me			Spooks (11:45PM)
HBO			The Bonfire Of The Vanities				Harry's War			Mother (7:15 PM)				Exorcist: The Beginning				When Trumpets Fade (10:50 PM)	
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Samurai Deeper Kyo	Shadow Of The Elves	Mission Odyssey	Rune Soldier	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Momo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Samurai Deeper Kyo	Mission Odyssey
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Global Family Sonza/ Amp		ME TV		PTA Best Of The Philippines		Global Family Sonza/ Amp	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Smackdown				JLU	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Everybody Hate Chris	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Comedy Central Presents	South Park	The Man Show
Lifestyle Network	Get Color	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	At Home With	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Tyler's Ultimate	Whose Wedding Is It Anyway?		Good Finds	Martha		Your Private Island	Genuine Article	E! True Hollywood Story	
MTV Philippines		Ashton's Greatest Punk'd Rants	Punk'D	Handpicked: Gary V	Pop Inc		MTV Hits (with SMS)			Get Spotted	MTV Hits	MTV Arena	Ultrasound Gary V	TRL		Ashton's Greatest Punk'd Rants	Punk'D	Sessions: Gary V	Rockola
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX News	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Presents		MYX Bandarito	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXLOG
National Geographic	Wildlife Diary	Nat'l Geographic Specials: Time of Elephants		Megastructures: Built to Extremes (Innovation)		Naked Science: Telepathy		Top 5 - About Egypt, Egypt: King Tut Undiscovered		WOW Miracle of Panama		About Asia: Cockroach Confidential		Planet Football: Barcelona Confidential		Megastructures: Ultimate Vegas Casino		Naked Science: Super Volcanoes	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Atbp.	Pinas Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ Rey Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K			
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	All That	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Lucso Margallo				Alindog				Eagle Squad				Neber 2 Geder				Bilog Bata At Bubog
Qtv	Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin		Zipang	Kaleido Star	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Magic Ring	Irene	Noel	Project 11	O, Mare Ko		News On Q	Women's Desk		Irene	Over The Green Fields
RPN 9						Global Window	RPN Aksyon NEWS	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The 4400		Medium		Invasion		Newswatch Now	Just For Laughs	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping		Quantum Global		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Friends Again		SBN Music Video	
Solar Sports						GWS 20-2006	NBA Playoffs Western Conf. Finals Game 1					NBA Playoffs Western Conf. Finals Game 1					Solar Sports Desk	PBO recap Day 2	NBA Action
Sports Plus				Raceworld		World Poker Tour 2				Giants World Cup Preview 12	Nopi Tunervision 12	World's Greatest Auto Shows		World Game		Auto Focus		Bay Ban Celebrity Poker Challenge	
Star Movies			The Dust (3:20 PM)			3 Ninjas (5:10 PM)				Garden Eye (6:50 PM)				The Waterboy			Bong Jula		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		American Idol	The Simple Life	The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	American Idol	The Simple Life	Scrubs	Arrested Development	The Drew Carey Show (Series 8)	Less Than Perfect	Seinfeld	American Idol [illegible]
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Sprite	Pinoy Big Brother	Wazzup Wazzup	World's Craziest Videos		Joey (8:20 PM)	Ghost Whisperer (9:10 PM)		News Central	Oprah		Reality World

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3 govs back proposal to outlaw CPP

By **Joey A. Gabieta**
PDI Visayas Bureau

LERIAS

EVARDONE

PALPARAN

TACLOBAN City—The proposal to outlaw the Communist Party of the Philippines received the support of three governors in Eastern Visayas, one of the areas in the country where the communist rebellion remains active.

Governors Rosette Lerias of Southern Leyte, Milagros Tan of Samar and Ben Evardone of Eastern Samar said they believed that the CPP has no right to be legally recognized because of its continued adherence to armed struggle through the New People's Army (NPA).

Lerias said she favored declaring the CPP illegal again as it appears to fail to "adjust to a non-violent method of participating (in) government."

"They are already in the mainstream of society, mainstream of politics, but they engage in (underground) activities. It is not fair. The government has given them all the leeway, so don't abuse it," said Lerias, who is also the chairperson of the Peace and Order Council in Eastern Visayas.

NPA attacks

Lerias referred to atrocities blamed on the NPA. Only Last May 6, two policemen were killed in Dolores, Eastern Samar who were killed in an ambush staged by a group of armed men believed to be NPA members. Killed were SPO2 Gerardo Cudiamat and SPO1 Norman Morallos.

Early this week, Major Gen. Jovito Palparan, formerly Eastern Visayas' top Army officer and now the commanding officer of the 7th Infantry Division based in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, said if he had his way, he would make the CPP illegal again.

Palparan claimed that the CPP, together with other organizations sympathetic to it and some opposition members, have formed a tactical alliance to topple the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In 1994, Congress repealed Republic Act 1700 or the Anti-Subversion Law making, in effect, the CPP a legal organization.

Terror acts

Evardone said that while he believed the CPP, as a political group, must be given the right to exist under a democratic society, it should be outlawed again if its armed component, the NPA, would continue to terrorize the people in the community.

"Any form of violence should be condemned," he added.

Governor Tan also said that as an official of the government, she would support any plan to make CPP illegal.

"But we should also consider taking some steps in helping our brothers and sisters in the mountain for they need government support too," she said.

Tan said that many people in the countryside were forced to join the CPP-NPA because they felt abandoned by the government.

Meanwhile, the government remained determined in ending the country's insurgency problem by 2010, according to Major Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, commanding general of the 8th Infantry Division based in Catbalogan, Samar.

"That's our target and we will do it," he told the INQUIRER.

Based on Ramos' assessment, there are over 1,000 active NPA members in the region, most of which are based in the provinces of Samar, Eastern Samar and Northern Samar.

Fishers' group says it won't go to the hills

LUCENA CITY—THE PAMALAKAYA, A national organization of militant fishermen, one of the leftist organizations which the military has tagged as fronts of the Communist Party of the Philippines, vowed not to abandon its legal struggle.

"We will not leave the legal and the parliamentary arena. We will assert our legality by all means, at all cost and whatever it takes," Gerry Albert Corpuz, Pamalakaya information officer, said in a statement released during the group's provincial chapter meeting here.

The national association of militant fishermen claimed of having a total membership of 80,000 in different parts of the country.

On Monday, controversial Army Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, an arch-enemy of the Left, suggested the need to revive the law that would again outlaw the CPP.

According to Palparan, the repeal of Republic Act 1700, or the Anti-Subversion Law, was a mistake because it enabled the legal fronts of the CPP to infiltrate the government through party-list organizations, referring to Bayan Muna, Anakpawis and Gabriela.

RA 1700 was repealed during the time of former president Fidel Ramos.

Corpuz said Palparan has no legal, moral and political business in calling for their elimination in the legal and parliamentary struggle. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI S. Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

10 fishers caught in Zambo

PAGADIAN CITY—Authorities arrested 10 fishermen caught fishing in a sanctuary in the municipal waters of Dimataling, Zamboanga del Sur on Tuesday. Deputy police chief for Zamboanga del Sur Supt. Belarmino de los Santos said the fishermen were on board two big vessels and were caught using fine nets while fishing in the municipal waters of Barangay Sumpot, which had been declared a fish sanctuary by the municipal agricultural office. De los Santos said residents saw the fishermen and thought they were just passing by the coastal waters. "But when they started hauling their nets off to the water the villagers alerted municipal authorities," he said.

Michael Sarcauga, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Trike drivers in terror drive

MAY NARINIG BA KAYO?

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Police here will tap tricycle drivers to boost its antiterror and anticrime campaign. Lawyer Emmanuel Fontanilla, chair of Bigkis Balaod, a group of lawyers advocating protection of human rights, said about 200 tricycle drivers were expected to join in the training on May 27. To be discussed during the training are techniques of information gathering, information analysis, surveillance and reporting. He said the participants are members of Bigkis Balaod, which has around 500 members coming from the ranks of tricycle drivers. The lawyer said helping the police in its drive against terrorism and criminality is part of the tricycle drivers' fulfillment of their social responsibility. Fontanilla believed tricycle drivers play a vital role in preventing terror attacks and criminality in the city as they meet and mingle with several people while plying their routes. He said the police pledged to provide security to drivers who would help in the campaign.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Grenade blast isolated case

COTABATO CITY—Mayor Muslimin Sema said the grenade attack on the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) here on Monday was an "isolated case" and had something to do with labor management problem. The blast at the city wharf injured two senior PPA employees, a security guard and a shipping porter. Two unidentified men riding a motorcycle were seen to have sped away after the explosion that happened shortly before 11 a.m. In his talk with his attending physician Gerardo Agustin, it was learned that chances of the victims to survive from shrapnel wounds are great. "Let's hope all of them will pass through the critical stage," Sema told reporters on the condition of PPA operations chief Gil Navarra, senior staff Arpa Mamalangcom, guard Abdullah Abubakar and porter Baldo Ali. The city mayor declined to elaborate on the alleged labor dispute at the PPA.

Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Batangas dad slain in ambush

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Two unidentified armed men shot dead a village councilor in an ambush along a national road in Lipa City on Tuesday. Police said Gerry Robles, 42, resident and councilor of Barangay Tipakan, Lipa City, died from at least eight bullet wounds in his head and other parts of his body. Noble said Robles was driving his Nissan pick-up (PFA 981) along Bonifacio St. in Barangay 10 when two armed persons waylaid him at around 8 a.m. Witnesses said the gunmen quickly boarded a parked motorcycle and escaped towards a still unknown direction.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Cavite cop shot dead

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A Cavite policeman moonlighting as a jeepney driver was shot dead while driving his jeep along a dimly-lit part of the Governor's Drive in Gen. Trias, Cavite on Tuesday. Police said PO2 Edgardo Lontoc, 38, assigned at the Trece Martires City Police Office and a resident of Barangay Mataas na Kahoy, Indang, Cavite, died from at least four bullet wounds in his nape. He said the victim was driving his passenger jeep when the suspect flagged him down along Barangay Manggahan and sat at the back of the driver's seat at around 8:30 p.m. The suspect suddenly pulled out a 9mm pistol and shot the policeman repeatedly. Shocked passengers quickly alighted from the vehicle and ran for safety. The gunman then took the steering wheel and escaped towards Trece Martires. Noble said police investigators recovered the abandoned jeep a few meters away from the crime scene.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Cops arrest Cordillera militia head for man's death in clash

BAGUIO CITY—POLICE ON MONday arrested a leader of a Cordillera militia in connection with the killing of a man during an encounter in Apayao in 2004.

Robert Angco, a leader of a defunct faction of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA), was implicated in a gun battle between armed CPLA men and security personnel of Furniture Trading Inc. (FTI), which operates in a forested section of Luna, Apayao.

In a 2004 statement, the CPLA claimed that the furniture factory had been used as a front for illegal logging that was depleting Apayao forests located outside FTI's licensed timber harvesting area. The firm denied this when the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) investigated the gunfight.

Senior Supt. Donato Bacquian, Apayao police director, said Angco, who ran and lost for governor of Apayao in 2004, was arrested for arson in 2004 due to the burning of FTI equipment following the encounter.

Angco has lived in Baguio after posting bail for the arson case, but Judge Salvador Carlos of the municipal trial court in Apayao issued a new arrest warrant against him due to charges implicating him in the death of an FTI employee.

The employee apparently died from wounds he obtained during the 2004 gunfight, Bacquian said.

Bacquian arrested Angco in his house here. The police took him to the Apayao provincial jail on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, police arrested a fugitive from Occidental Mindoro who went to a local hospital for treatment of a wound in his foot.

Noel Mangoltong, police said, escaped from the Sablayan prison and penal colony in Occidental Mindoro on May 19.

Mangoltong was convicted here by a local judge for car theft but he was jailed in Mindoro. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

AIDS team watches effects of Baguio bar curfew

BAGUIO CITY—A GOVERNMENT agency monitoring the spread of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is studying the impact on the local commercial sex trade of a curfew on Baguio bars and nightclubs.

The city's social hygiene clinic and the local AIDS Watch Council said Mayor Braulio Yaranon's directive restricting nightclubs and karaoke establishments to operate only until 2 a.m. reduces the exposure of club entertainers to the risk of unhealthy sex.

But Dr. Celia Flor Brillantes, chief of the city social hygiene clinic, said the curfew's biggest disadvantage is that it pushes sex workers back to operating underground.

Brillantes reported a 50 percent drop in the number of sex workers in the first quarter of this year, from the 2,000 recorded in March 2005 to about 950 in March 2006, although she said the abrupt decrease could be attributed to the season.

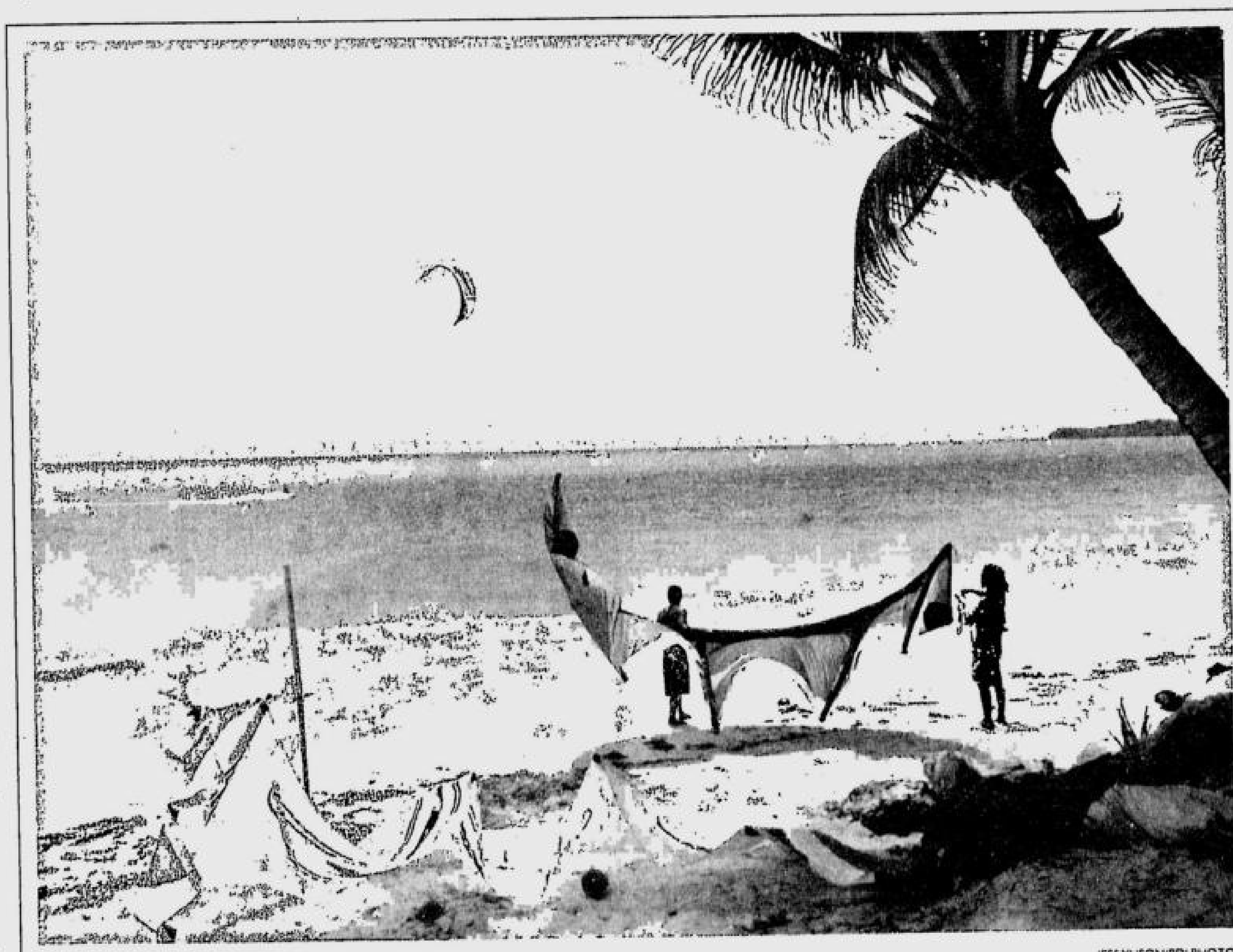
Commercial sex workers tour the provinces, often working for only six months in the city during peak tourist months before moving to other parts of Luzon, she said during a press conference here on Wednesday.

She said the city government has compelled bar owners to give their entertainers fixed six-month contracts due to the unpredictable mobility of sex workers.

Members of the city council and local bar owners have criticized Yaranon's curfew directive for its impact on tourism.

Only a councilor, a pastor, supported the directive.

Councilor Erdolfo Balajadia, chair of the council committee on health, said the drop in the population of sex workers should be investigated to avert an increase in sexually transmitted diseases that could go unrecorded. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



JESS YUSON/PDI PHOTO

KITE SITE
Tourists enjoy flying kites in Boracay, especially as tropical storm Caloy approached, bringing with it strong winds. Boracay is famous for its white sand beaches.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Nuns' center teaches kids self-reliance

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Iriga City

SISTER FELICITAS' FATHER HAD WISHED THAT she would work for the poor children of her hometown to pay back and thank God for giving him plenty of offspring.

Agapito de Lima, an educator who founded the public school in San Agustin, Iriga City in Camarines Sur and taught his children to think and to surpass mediocrity, lived long and died a happy man in 1981 at the age of 91 because his daughter, a nun of the Order of St. Augustine (OSA), was able to fulfill his wish.

In 1974, with blessings from her congregation's superiors, Sister Felicitas worked with the community of San Agustin. Together with another OSA nun, Sr. Ma. La Salette E. Baysa, she started working on a welfare facility for poor children and called it the Our Lady of Fatima Center for Human Development (FACE).

For almost 20 years, the FACE has given shelter and hope to destitute, abandoned, abused and orphaned children.

Beginnings

Sisters Felicitas and La Salette began their community ministry in San Agustin in 1974. Every day, they commuted to San Agustin from La Consolacion College, their first residence, 5 km from the center of Iriga.

The immersion, Felicitas said, helped them understand the community's problems.

After a year of traveling going back and forth to San Agustin, the two nuns were asked by the villagers to stay on for the night. They agreed, provided they had their own sleeping place.

Responding instantly, the people brought the materials and built a small nipa hut and a place where they could pray. By nightfall, they had a 20-sq-ft dwelling, walled by cheesecloth from used sacks.

From that moment on, the nuns settled in the village and lived among the people. The same villagers later helped them build the welfare facility that eventually focused its services on poor children.

Self-reliance

At present, the FACE provides food, shelter, clothing and education to 150 resident-children. It is run by 25 OSA nuns and volunteers, from income derived from developing the property donated by Sister Felicitas' family to the Caceres Archdiocese.

"We don't rely on donations. We raise hogs. We have 23 sows and three boars, and sell an average of 15 hogs a month, and intercrop bananas and coconuts to earn for our daily operational costs," Sister Felicitas said.

The children are given tasks and earn P12.50 an hour. Their money is kept in saving accounts in their names, and used to pay for their monthly tuition, school supplies and uniforms, and personal stuff, Sister Felicitas said. The cost of instruction for each child is P150 per month.

SR. FELICITAS de Lima (center) poses with her "children," villagers and supporters of her child welfare program at the Our Lady of Fatima Center for Human Development in San Agustin, Iriga City.

To generate more income, the school accepts children from surrounding communities, who pay P150 monthly tuition.

Sister Felicitas said the center had also cut expenses by recycling its garbage and producing organic fertilizer, bathroom and laundry soaps.

The De Limas have donated more lots, thus expanding the compound of the facility from three hectares to to 7.5 ha. The total area of donated land parcels has reached 10 ha.

Sister Felicitas said a network with other institutions had been established to widen support to their client-children in terms of skills and livelihood training and college scholarship programs.

Low key

The nun declined to have her photograph taken, saying she preferred to be away from the limelight. She is an elder sister of Commissioner Lilia de Lima of the Philippine Export Zone Authority and an aunt of Juliet de Lima, wife of Communist Party founder Jose Ma. Sison.

When she was in her 30s, Sister Felicitas was assigned by her superiors to teach and serve as guidance counselor at the Marian Academy, an Augustinian school in Isabela, Negros Occidental. Most of the students there came from families of the *dumaan*, regularly paid workers living inside sugar estates or their vicinity.

It was in Negros, she said, where she came face to face with poverty.

Despite the deprivation she experienced outside the convent and the academe, living for years with the families of sugar workers was more rewarding for her. She joined the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines (RMP) in 1970, an organization of religious workers that carried out their apostolic mission to the poor through dioceses all over the Philippines in the pre-martial law era.

Sister Felicitas said that among those who influenced her in her work are Fathers Edicio de la Torre, now a popular democracy advocate, and Toti Olaguer of the Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas.

Selflessness

Her first RMP assignment was at the Social Action Center in Silay City under Fr. Luis Jalandoni, now chief of the negotiating panel of the communist-led National Democratic Front. The nun was immediately deployed among the families of striking sugar workers of Victorias Milling Co.

In 1971, she was appointed RMP regional coordinator for Luzon.

When the strongman Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1972, Sister Felicitas' superiors told her to take a leave and study social work at the Asian Social Institute.

The FACE founder said the principles she learned meant living a frugal life, maintaining integrity, striving for industry and giving part of one's self to the poor.

Looking back at Bagatao Island's glorious past

A PANORAMIC view of Magallanes poblacion and pier from the Sta. Lourdes Grotto on Bagatao Island's hilltop.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

By Gina Rodriguez
Magallanes, Sorsogon

AT NIGHT, BAGATAO ISLAND CAN BE SEEN BY the flickering light of its old lighthouse that guides vessels cruising the Burias and Ticao passes from or to the treacherous San Bernardino Strait.

Situated at the mouth of the Sorsogon Bay, Bagatao has a land area of 543 hectares and can be reached in five minutes by motorized *banca* from the pier of Magallanes town in Sorsogon, 648 km from Manila.

With a population of about 2,000 dependent on fishing, seaweed farming and coconut for livelihood, it shields the poblacion from destructive waves and wind during the southwest monsoon or *"habagat,"* and during strong typhoons.

In his accounts on Bagatao, 73-year-old Rogerio Escobal, a local historian, mentions another smaller, farther concrete lighthouse on the island, facing the mouth of the bay. Since 2000, he has been squeezing into his weekends and work leaves from his office in Makati City his mission of researching and writing about the history of his hometown of Magallanes.

Marine life cycle

Bagatao's coastlines are naturally endowed with mangroves and nipa that provide habitat for marine life.

"Depending on the season months, certain marine mammals visit the Bagatao waters, such as sea turtles, dolphins, whale sharks, sea cows and manta rays," Escobal said.

The island has two barangays—Behia, at the southwestern part, and Biga, at the northeastern part. Behia is sometimes called the "Halabang-Baybay" because of its long stretch of dirty-white sand beach, but it gained prominence as an archeological site in past surveys conducted by the National Museum.

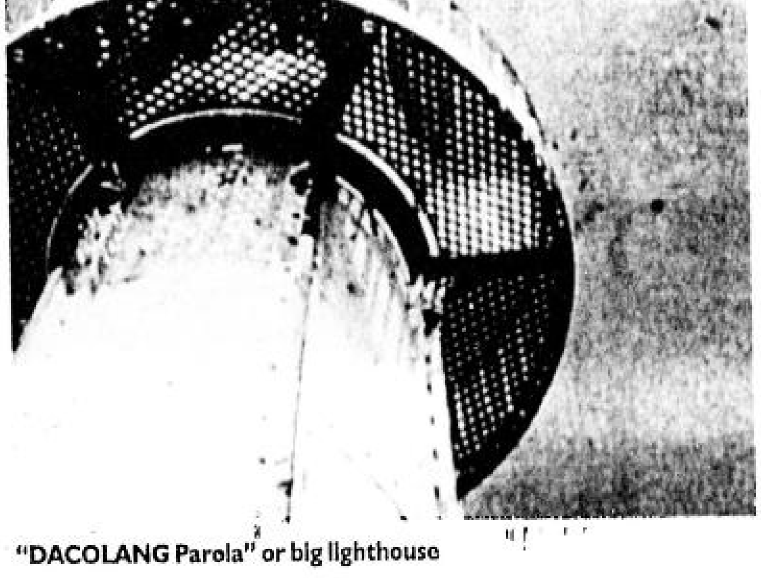
Bagatao is a favorite destination of devotees. Recently, people on a pilgrimage trekked to the Sta. Lourdes Grotto, an uphill climb on a concrete stairway to a 124-meter peak. The steep area is called the "Binanderahan" because early inhabitants once built several watch posts at strategic locations from where they raised flags upon sighting invading Moro vessels.

On a view deck near the statue is a view of the town proper and the islet of Tinacos in the northern side of the bay and Ticao in the south.

Three of Escobal's accounts—"The Malaspina Expedition and the Pacific Islands," "The Bagatao Island and the Shipyard" and "Los Galeones Bagatao"—delve on the Philippine-built galleons in Bagatao during the Spanish period.

A major goal of his undertaking is to provide evidence to the National Historical Institute that the present-day cove-shaped Sitio Pansod in Barangay Behia had been the site of a Spanish shipyard.

In 1610, Gov. Juan de Silva gave money and sacred vessels and ornaments to the Church to establish a shipyard in the ancient village of Calaguimi, believed by Escobal to be Pansod. The shipyard had produced more than 15 galleons, notably the 2,000-ton "Santisima Trinidad" which was last to be built in 1751 and the largest to have crossed the Pacific Ocean.



"DACOLANG Parola" or big lighthouse

Another vessel was the "Nuestra Señora del Buen Socorro," the grandest and best galleon ever built in the Philippines, excelled by only a few made in Europe.

As a port of call for the Manila-Acapulco galleons, the shipyard contributed to the development of international trade and commerce in the Philippines during the Spanish colonial rule. It also served as a defense facility to drive out Dutch and British intruders, and Moros who attacked the island at least three times (1616, 1627 and 1637).

Escobal observed that "there were no less than 20 foreign and Filipino historians, authors and writers who have highlighted in their writings the importance of these galleons to the Spanish colonial authorities."

He wrote that while the operation of the Bagatao shipyard for 140 years brought glory and prestige to Spanish colonial authorities, it also brought miseries to the inhabitants, emptied many villages, spread hunger to the families of men who were conscripted for shipyard labor, and in many instances, attracted Moro attacks.

Moreover, the industry depleted timber trees in Bagatao and the forests of Magallanes. Information showed that the hardwood species *"parina,"* the most durable timber used for shipbuilding, was totally gone.

Historical marker

A historical marker should be installed in Pansod, the "true site of the ancient village of Calaguimi," to immortalize and give meaning to the untold miseries, hardships and injustices suffered by the Bicolano laborers engaged in the shipbuilding enterprise, Escobal said.

On May 5-8, a team from the National Museum's Archaelogy Division led by Mary Jane Louise Bolunia, made a test excavation and inspected three sites on the island and found stone artifacts related to underwater activities. The items have been submitted for laboratory test analysis, said Escobal.

Earlier, on March 28, NHI executive director Ludovico Badoy assured Escobal that the agency would wait for the results of the site inspection and survey to be conducted by its NM team on the former Spanish *astillero* in Bagatao.

Only then can it "decide with finality on where to install the marker," Badoy said.

Thinking of no rest when scouring dated records about Bagatao's storied past, Escobal said he believed the island was worthy of admiration and high regard because of its glorious past.

PRECIOUS ITEM LEONCIO BALBIN JR./PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Villagers carry a boat away from shore as strong waves hit coastal towns in Ilocos Sur at the height of tropical storm "Caloy." Most of the coastal communities rely on fishing for livelihood.

Central Luzon PNP exec sued for car theft

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—Charges of malversation and violation of the antifencing law were filed yesterday against the former chief of the Traffic Management Group in Central Luzon.

The criminal cases involving Supt. Napoleon Cauyan's alleged use of a recovered stolen car and his possession of stolen car parts were filed at the Office of the Ombudsman, according to Supt. Benjamin de los Santos, investigation division head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and lead complainant.

De los Santos said the cases were filed after CIDG agents recovered several stolen vehicles and car parts from the compound of Cauyan in Barangay Baseco in Mariveles, Bataan, on Monday.

Cauyan could not be reached for comment on Wednesday. His lawyer, Ananias Canlas Jr., said his client would face the charges.

Canlas denied that Cauyan was in hiding. "He's preparing for the anticipated charges against him," the lawyer said in a phone interview.

On Tuesday, Cauyan called the INQUIRER to say that he bought with his own money the Mitsubishi Pajero, Nissan Sentra and Nissan Pathfinder found in his compound.

The engines and parts belonged to a trucking business that he started in 1996, he said.

De los Santos said "pursuit operations" were still ongoing against Cauyan, who was placed under investigation for various cases.

These involved the alleged anomalous release of four suspected members of a Bulacan-based car theft syndicate and stolen vehicles on March 6; four pending cases of grave threats, slight physical injuries, robbery and homicide; and dishonesty and fraudulent entry in the Philippine National Police.

Cauyan said it was the TMG-Special Operations Group, not the regional or provincial TMG offices, that carried out the operations against the Bulacan car theft syndicate.

The rest of the cases have been dismissed by the court, he said.

Earlier, he said he eluded arrest by the 304th Provincial Police Mobile Group in Bataan on Saturday because he "felt they were going to kill me."

Cauyan did not oppose his relief on Monday but called on his former subordinates to fight the PNP's "discriminatory attitude" toward policemen who had "not obtained education from prestigious schools."

He maintained that the allegations against him were being orchestrated by police officers who wanted his post or by car theft syndicates.

He said he was "not a protector of car theft and highway robbery syndicates." *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk and Luige del Puerto in Manila*

2 workers die, 13 hurt as truck rams quarters

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—TWO PERSONS were killed and 13 others were injured when a cargo truck rammed into the sleeping quarters of construction workers in Cabatuan town in Iloilo on Tuesday night.

The truck was on its way to Barangay Tiring in Cabatuan, 24 km north of this city, when the driver, Rene Singelecio, lost control of the vehicle as it negotiated a curve along the national road.

It swerved to the right shoulder of the road, hitting the canteen and sleeping quarters of the workers at around 10:25 p.m. The workers are among those constructing the new Iloilo international airport in Cabatuan and Sta. Barbara towns.

Reports from the Iloilo Provincial Police Office identified the fatalities as Federico Hollero, 35, of Sibunag, Guimaras; and Jason Dayaday, 27, of Cebu City.

Hollero was pronounced dead on arrival at the Ramon Tabiana District Hospital in Cabatuan, while Dayaday died while undergoing treatment.

The injured included Singelecio and his helper Efraim Azucena, and were brought to the hospital.

The other victims were identified as Tomas Danoy, 35; Nestor Cabrera, 42; Ronnie Sincida, 21; Eljen Ebrado, 25; and Antonio Gentapa, 45; all of Cebu; Jerry Catalbas, 35, of Guimaras; Rodolfo Villamar, 53, of Cardona, Rizal; Isidro Barquillo, 41, of Dumarao, Capiz; Dondon Jorda, 29, of Leyte; Juanito Abegonia, 32, of Anilao, Iloilo; and Marcelino Sebastian, 37, of Dingle, Iloilo.

Young members of Badjao tribe learn to surf Net

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
General Santos City

CHILDREN STUDYING IN THE Bawing National High School (BNHS) in General Santos City still help their parents catch fish, but they are no longer as worried as before when they miss some of their classes.

They know that they can now go over their lessons with the click of the mouse.

School principal Leonardo Genoguin recalled that Badjao students were often absent for days or even weeks to join their parents in fishing, their main source of livelihood. When they returned to their classes, they were accompanied by their parents, who explained to the teachers why they had not been around for a long time.

"We could not simply turn the students away, but we would advise them to catch up with the lessons," senior instructor Melanie Daan said.

Impoverished

Bawing, a coastal fishing village, is a 30-minute drive from the heart of the city. It is a community of poor families, including Badjao people or the so-called sea gypsies of Mindanao.

They live in boats which cluster around moorings in the Sarangani Bay. Aside from fishing, they earn from bartering fish products for farm produce, such as cassava and fruits.

Despite their situation, the residents confront the challenge that neither poverty nor inadequate school facilities can stop them from achieving their dreams of a better life: finishing studies for the students; joy and pride for their parents, and a sense of fulfillment for the teachers.

Skeptical

In August last year, the BNHS was chosen as a beneficiary of the Computer Literacy and Internet Connection (CLIC) project of the US Agency for International Development's Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) Program and received computers, a high-speed, broad-band Internet connection, a local area network, and a printer.

The project included a one-week training on basic computer maintenance and troubleshooting for students and teachers. Several teachers have been selected for more extensive training on integrating materials obtained from the Internet for classroom instruction.

Some 290 schools have so far received similar assistance from the CLIC. The project aims to reach at least 700 public high schools by Oct. 1, 2007.

The CLIC is among the livelihood, infrastructure, agricultural and education projects being implemented by the GEM Program in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and other "conflict-affected" areas in Mindanao.

"It was an exciting day for all the students, teachers and parents, when the Bawing National High School became part of the global information village," said GEM-CLIC program manager Happy Raagas.

Raagas said the high school principal was then skeptical when the project was proposed to him a few years back. "I almost turned it down because I thought it would require a financial counterpart, which we could hardly afford, given the school's limited resources," Genoguin said.

To qualify for the project, a school must agree to set aside enough space for a computer laboratory, provide its manager, and ensure that selected teachers are available for training.

However, the project proponent emphasized that the primary responsibility for raising counterpart funds falls on the Parents-Teachers-Community Association (PTCA). Before the project is installed, the group must agree to sustain the cost of Internet connection after the expiration of the 12-month subscription provided by the CLIC.

Genoguin met with the Bawing PTCA and told its members about the CLIC project and the required counterpart funds. To his surprise, they agreed to raise the amount. The parents even volunteered to renovate an unused, dilapidated classroom to be used as the computer laboratory.

Improved grades

In August last year, when one of the students turned on the computer and surfed the Internet for the first time, it officially made their school at par with its "wired" counterpart institutions, not only in Mindanao but also in other parts of the country.

People visiting the school for the first time could hardly believe that the school already has an Internet connection. Bawing has no landline telephone system yet. The principal had to show the visitors the microwave antenna—which provides the broadband Internet connection—mounted on the roof deck of the school administration building.

With access to computers and the Internet, Genoguin noted, the students have been performing better in their classes.

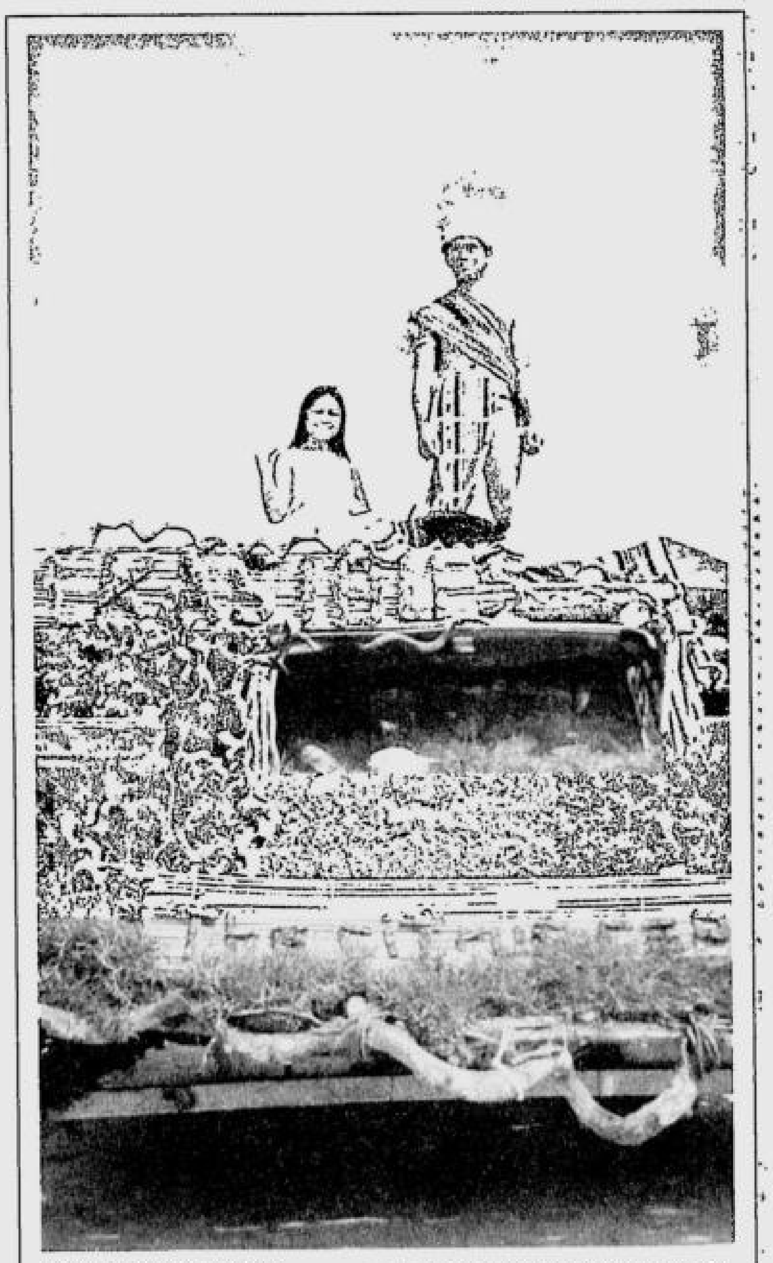
Nisan Pilar, a fourth-year student, said her grades had improved significantly.

She can now conduct research on-line, she said. "Before, I used to spend a lot of time sifting through the pages of outdated reference materials in the library. But now, I can get all the information I need with just a few clicks of the mouse," Pilar said.

Beth Potayre, a sophomore and daughter of a fisherman, said she had been expanding her English vocabulary by regularly surfing in educational websites that provide reading and language exercises.

"Research has become easy and the amount of information I can get from Google, my favorite search engine, is just amazing," she said.

This development, according to Genoguin, has convinced the parents of the need to invest in their children's education. In fact, the parents committed themselves to contribute P15 a month each to raise the money for the maintenance of the Internet connection and payment for electricity and computer parts once the CLIC's financial support ends in August.



CITRUS CAPITAL MELVIN GASCON-PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

The country's citrus capital, Kasibu town, is showcased in this float during Wednesday's celebration of Nueva Vizcaya's 167th founding anniversary in the capital town of Bayombong.

Reyes says attempt to kill antilogging exec led to death of brother

DAVAO CITY—ENVIRONMENT Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday said an assassination attempt on Samuel Danganan of the National Anti-Environment Crime Task Force (Naectaf) ended with the death of the target's brother.

Reyes said syndicates were after Samuel for his crackdown on illegal logging.

On Monday, Dangangan's younger brother Johnny, 32, was shot dead in Quezon City.

The older Danganan is the operations chief of Naectaf, a newly created law enforcement body of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

His brother had just driven him to the airport in his van, but was shot in a street.

Reyes said it was very apparent that the culprit's target was Danganan, who had been in the forefront of the DENR's crackdown on illegal logging throughout the country.

"It's a case of assassination because of his contribution to our efforts of protecting the environment," Reyes told the INQUIRER at Apo View Hotel, where a convention on environmental concerns was being held.

"We will look closely with the police and other law enforcement agencies to identify and apprehend the suspects," Reyes said.

Danganan, in a telephone interview, said: "It was I who was the target. It was a case of mistaken identity."

But he would not say who was behind the killing pending investigation.

Early last month, the INQUIRER was with the Naectaf team during a raid on a resort owned by Mayor Roberto Luna Jr. of Lingig town in Surigao del Sur.

The task force seized more than 11,000 illegally cut trees.

Danganan said it was Naectaf's largest operation against illegal logging so far.

Luna denied owning the logs and said he was surprised why the logs were in his property.

But DENR officials said the logs were kept there for transport to places where they would be sold.

Often, the fight against illegal logging has been hindered by lack of manpower and funds for the DENR.

Some areas under the department lack foresters while in areas where illegal logging syndicates are active, foresters are outnumbered and outgunned. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

LOTTO RESULT

EZ2
13 20

SUERTRES
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(All in exact order)

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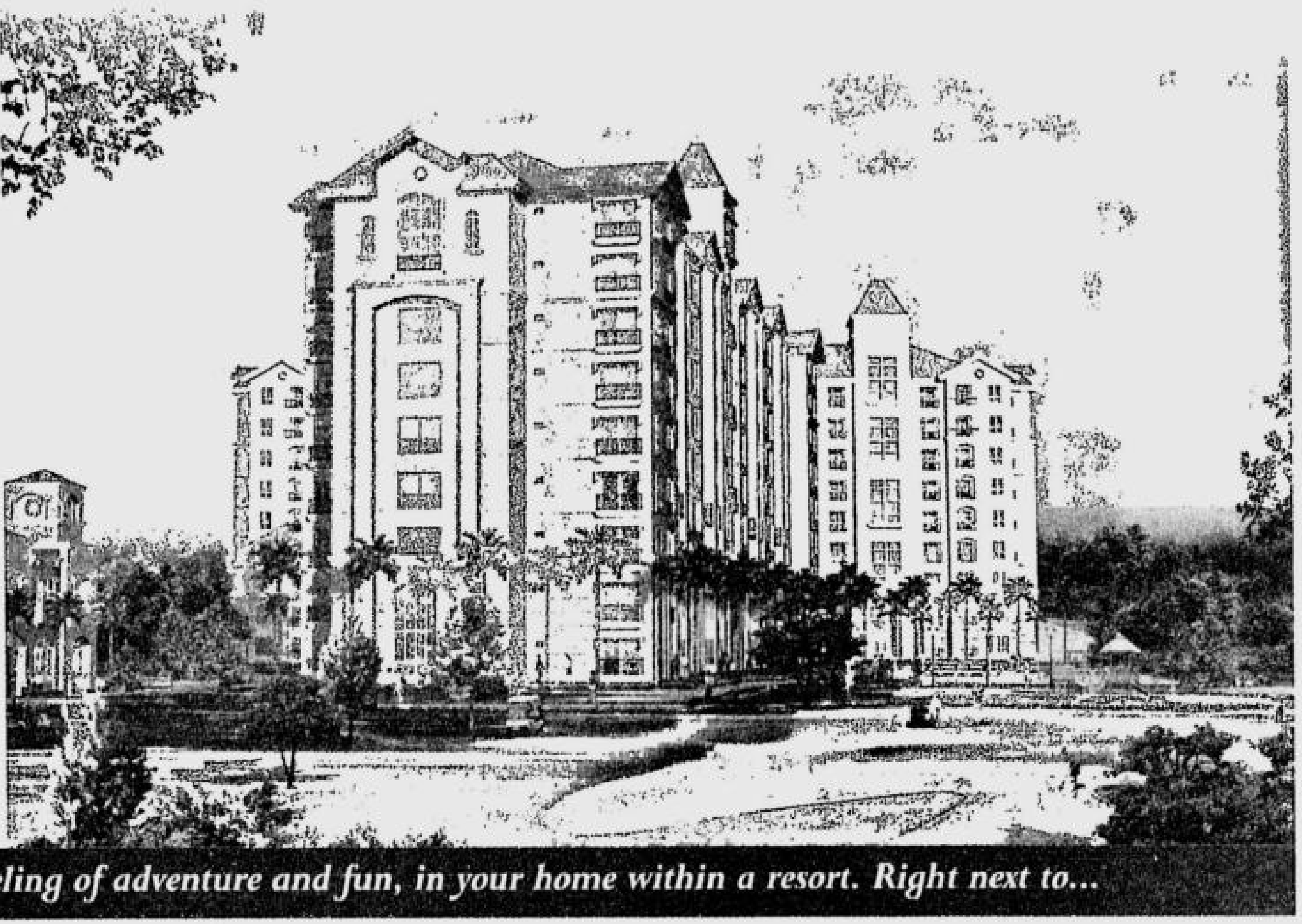

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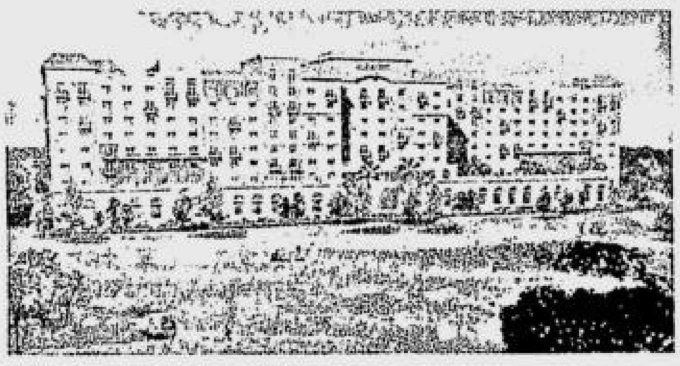

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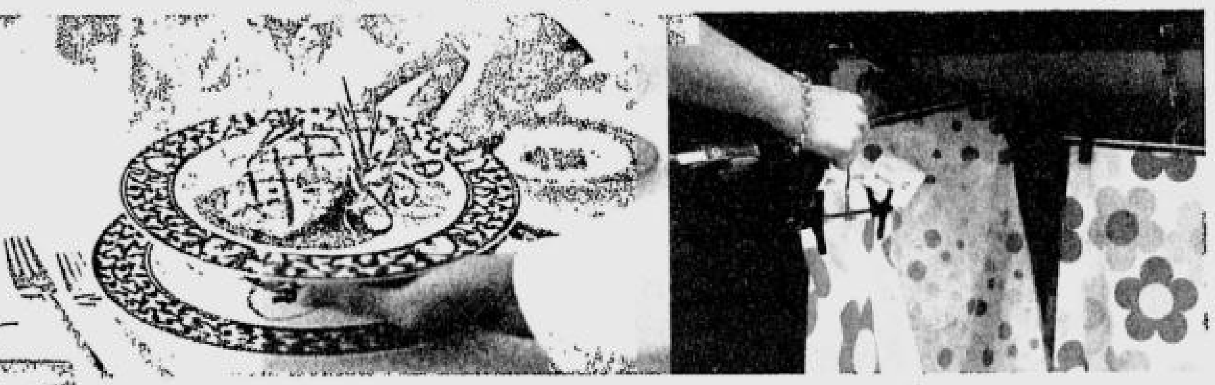

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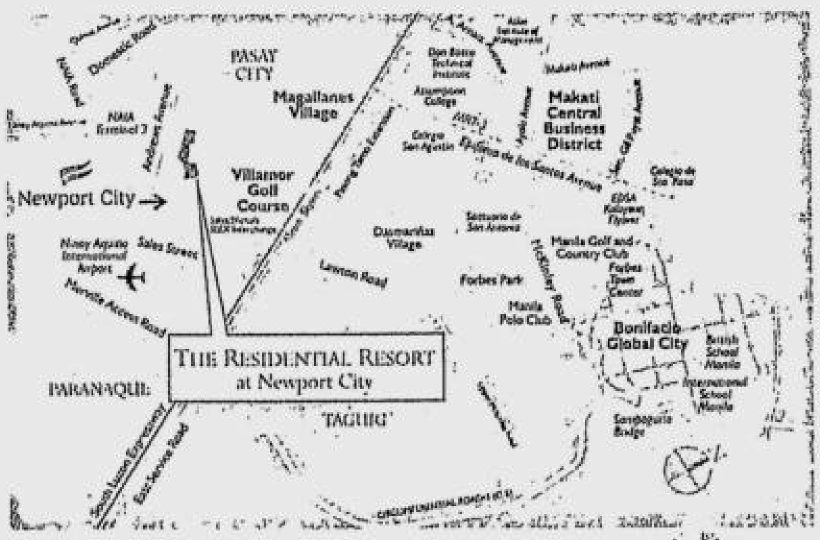
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WHAT'S INSIDE

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- **5 Caloocan nightclubs raided; 100 GROs arrested** / A18
- **Pinoys hampered by lack of school resources, says Intel science fair winner** /A18

RAYMOND Amurao with mother Janet

Five dead in QC fire

By DJ Yap

A FIVE-YEAR-OLD GIRL AND HER one-year-old brother perished along with their parents and nanny in a three-hour fire that struck their townhouse in Quezon City early yesterday.

The fire that hit 50 Miami Townhouse on Don Jose St., Barangay Sto. Domingo broke out at a little past 2 a.m.

When the blaze was finally put out, the bodies of the girl identified as Snow and her brother Sky, their parents Johnson, 34, and Pinpin Dy, 33, and nanny Vicky Torrecampo, 50, were found inside the bedroom, fire officials said.

The fire started at the second floor of the three-story structure, quickly spreading to the rest of the house, according to Bureau of Fire Protection-Quezon City clerk John Alec de Veyra.

The Dys and the nanny were sleeping when the blaze struck. They were likely trapped inside the bedroom and were unable to escape because of the smoke, arson investigators said.

Reaching the fourth alarm, the fire was put out at 5:19 a.m., De Veyra said. The cause of the blaze had not yet been established.

Fire officials could not immediately give an estimate of the damages.

With Melissa de Quiros

Cops looking for 2 kidnap victims

By Melissa de Quiros

POLICEMEN ARE STILL LOOKING for two women abducted on Monday by three persons who introduced themselves as policemen near a mall in Quezon City. A third victim, a man, managed to free himself and ran away.

Emil Benedicto, 23; Gianima, 20; and Almira Bilao, 23, all residents of Caloocan City, were walking on the North Edsa footbridge near SM City at around 5:30 p.m. Monday when three armed men in civilian clothes approached them.

Investigator SPO1 Felipe Tumibay said the men grabbed Benedicto's hands and accused him of being a "snatcher."

Handcuffed

Upon reaching the Paramount building, the suspects allegedly handcuffed Benedicto and forcibly dragged Gianima and Almira with them.

But Benedicto managed to escape when bystanders came to assist them. He sustained a wound on his eyebrow when one of the suspects punched him during the struggle. The abductors also took his wallet which had P500 inside, police said. With the two women, the suspects quickly boarded a taxi with plate number TVY 138, which sped off toward the direction of Cubao, police said.

Missed flight

Gianima was scheduled to fly to Kuwait as a domestic helper that day, but because of the incident, she was unable to make the flight, Tumibay said.

He added that the kidnappers might have intended to stop Gianima from leaving. "The motive could be personal," the policeman said.

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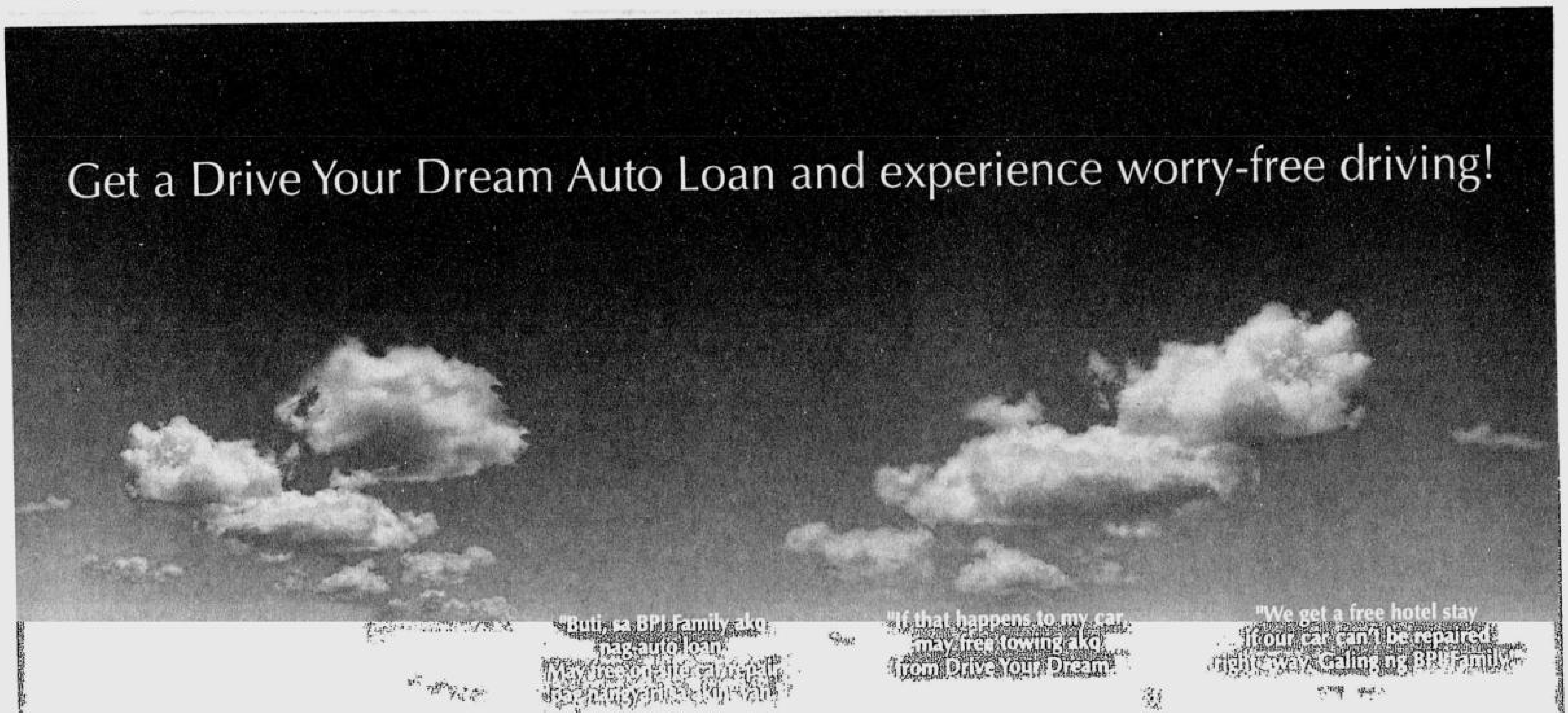
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5 suspected vice dens raided

By Nancy C. Carvajal

AROUND 100 WOMEN, INCLUDING a minor, were arrested in a raid conducted by health and police officials on Tuesday on several establishments in Caloocan City which were allegedly being used as fronts for prostitution.

Raided were the RBB Videoke Bar, STI Disco, Lady L Videoke Bar, Working Hideaway and From North Disco located on 3rd Avenue, East Grace Park.

"We have received complaints that lewd shows and illegal acts were going on in some bars in the area," said Russel Ramirez, the secretary of City Mayor Enrico Echiverri.

He added that the team which conducted the raid discovered that some of the establishments were found to be violating some city regulations like the building code and fire regulations while some were operating without a permit.

"They would be investigated before they would be charged with violation of city ordinance and we would recommend that their establishments be closed," Ramirez said.

He added that the owner of the bar where a minor was found to be working as a guest relation officer would be charged with the child abuse act.

On the other hand, the other women who fail to show working permits would also be charged.

Sick of rumor, but quite well

By Tarra V. Quismundo

"IF THEY CAN SHOW PROOF THAT I WENT to a hospital and sought treatment, I'll jump out of this window," Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay told the INQUIRER the other day during an interview in his office at the 21st floor of City Hall.

BINAY: Who's ill?

RUDY ESPERAS

For a man who, according to circulating text messages and the rumor mill, is gravely ill, the 63-year-old Binay keeps a punishing schedule.

He works 18 hours a day, plays badminton for one-and-a-half hours three times a week, lifts weights twice a week and goes on daily morning walks around his city.

In fact, he told the INQUIRER, he had never been sidelined by a serious illness throughout his 20 years of public service. The only times he had to go on leave were when he was recovering from the flu, he added.

To keep himself fit, Binay said he eats only fish and vegetables and takes multivitamins, especially Vitamin C. He added that he stopped smoking in 1971 and drinks only during social gatherings.

According to the rumors, the mayor has been undergoing regular dialysis for his kidney. Binay also laughed off reports that he was suffering from lupus, the same disease that plagued deposed strongman Ferdinand Marcos, by turning the body's immune system against the organs, tissues, and bodily systems it is supposed to protect.

"It's all about politics. Malacañang is behind all of this. It was the same issue they raised against me in 2004, and they're just reviving it," said Binay, who also heads the United Opposition, a coalition of anti-government figures and groups calling on President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down from office.

"They cannot think of anything else. I think they did a survey that showed that one of the best ways to dissuade people from voting for a candidate was to say he was sick. Who would want to vote for somebody who's ill?" added the mayor who is a regular fixture in many anti-GMA rallies in his city.

Based on recent news reports, Ms Arroyo and her husband allegedly convinced Sen. Lito Lapid to run against Binay in the 2007 local elections. This was confirmed by Lapid himself, although in a radio interview earlier this week, he stressed that it was his decision to run against Binay.

The mayor blamed the rumors on his political opponents whom he said used his trips to the United States last year to fuel talk about his health. Binay explained that he was in the US for three weeks in November to be with his wife, Elenita, who had knee surgery in Los Angeles. He left again in December to be with his family for Christmas and New Year, as his wife was still recovering from the operation.

"They put those stories together and said I went on leave to get treatment," said Binay. "Those who started these rumors belong to the same group that spread rumors about my health in the 2004 elections."

Not a safe place for bad guys

By Jocelyn R. Uy and Margaux C. Ortiz

CRIMINALS LOOKING OUT FOR PREY ON the streets of Metro Manila, beware.

Over 70 persons accused of various crimes have been arrested so far this week in line with security measures being implemented by the police for the opening of classes next month.

Ten of the suspects were nabbed by operatives of the National Capital Region Police Office while 62 others were arrested in Manila as part of the Manila Police District's "Oplan Balik Paaralan" project.

According to Supt. Sotero Ramos Jr., chief of the NCRPO Regional Intelligence Special Operations Office (RISOO), the week-long anti-crime operations were aimed at getting rid of persons who could prey on students when they troop back to school in June.

Those arrested by the NCRPO had been issued warrants of arrest in courts in Metro Manila and Laguna province for various offenses. Seven of them were identified as Gerry Custodio, Joner Daquegan, Ian Sioson, Darby Reyes, Ferdinand Marquez, Christopher Pineda, Raul Regaspi. They all face charges of robbery, said Ramos.

Two other suspects, Lester Jalocon and Mario Velasquez, were arrested for violation of Batas Pambansa 6 or illegal possession of deadly weapons. Both were allegedly members of the "Laglag Barya Gang."

Police also arrested Bernardo Mendez in Calamba City, Laguna, for a murder case filed at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 224.

The MPD, meanwhile, said it picked up 62 suspected street criminals this week in line with its "Oplan Balik Paaralan" project.

MPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong had earlier instructed all station command units to intensify their anti-crime operations to ensure the safety of thousands of students returning to their classes in a few weeks,

The MPD has deployed a number of plainclothes and uniformed policemen near universities and schools to monitor and apprehend petty criminals such as snatchers and robbers.

MPD Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (CIDU) chief Romulo Sapitula had earlier said that the police would be setting up assistance centers at the University Belt, Mendiola and Taft Avenue to provide help to students in the next few weeks.

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AMURAO (far left) and a team from the Philippine Science High School, which also won third place in the Intel science fair, are all smiles after the awarding ceremony. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A winner against all odds

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FILIPINO STUDENTS MAY HAVE THE SKILLS, but our schools still lack the resources.

"If we talk about skills, we are catching up," Raymond Joseph Amurao, the 16-year-old Marikina City student who placed third in the recent Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Indiana, USA told the INQUIRER.

"But our schools still lack resources, especially compared to schools in already developed countries," added Raymond, who had just graduated in March from the Marikina City Science High School, said.

The grand winner in the zoology category where Raymond won third place came from Taiwan. There were also many winners from the United States, while only two of the six projects from the Philippines won awards.

The teenager, who is planning to take up a chemistry course in college, won third place for his work titled "Biofuel and Soaps from Janitor Fish Oil."

The other Filipino winners were three students from the Philippine Science High School who won third place in the team category for their work titled "Elastomeric Grating for Wavelength Switching in Optical Communication Systems."

Raymond and his mother, Janet Amurao — his chemistry teacher in high school who also served as his coach — discovered that the janitor fish could produce significant volumes of oil whose fuel value was comparable to cocodiesel, now being promoted by the government as an alternative fuel. The award has inspired Raymond to continue working on the project and train younger students to conduct more tests.

"The project still needs a lot of improvement. I will try my best to continue the project because of its big impact on the environment and the economy," Raymond said.

His dream is to finally test the fish oil in vehicles. His winning project was only based on laboratory results and analyses showing that the fuel value of the extracted oil was similar to that of commercial diesel. It has not been tested on any equipment.

"We will send a proposal to the city government to test the oil on engines. We want this to be a livelihood for residents in the city," Raymond added. Fishermen around the Marikina River had regarded the fish as pests since they multiply quickly, depriving other fish of food and space.

A very absurd statement by a PCGG exec

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

ALLOWING JOURNALISTS THE special privilege of carrying guns for their protection solves only half of the problem. They should be taught not only how to use a gun but also how to become responsible firearm holders.

The Philippine National Police (PNP), which gives out firearm licenses, should be able to determine who are legitimate journalists from what Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez calls "hao siao" writers or poseurs.

Many persons pose as reporters to extort from government employees or private individuals. Some of these poseurs were listed as journalists killed in line of duty.

I agree with Gonzalez who said not all journalists were killed in connection with their profession. Some of them were killed because of a business deal gone sour or for personal reasons.

For example, the reported journalist from Surigao who was gunned down in Manila was also working as an agent of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR). Which was the reason for his killing: his being a journalist or his being a government agent?

Here's an addendum to the use of a firearm: If a person doesn't know how to use a gun, it's better for him not to have a gun at all.

* * *

"I just wanted to have fun with friends," said Presidential Commission on Good Government Commissioner Ricardo Abcede on why he invited former First Lady Imelda Marcos to his birthday party celebration on May 12.

I can't find a more stupid reason than Abcede's statement. He probably still had a hangover from the birthday celebration when he said that.

Why would Imelda Marcos be invited to a party of a PCGG official whose office is about to divest her of some of her ill-gotten wealth?

Probably, the PCGG compromise with the Marcoses is already a done deal and that birthday party sort of closed the deal

* * *

From the time it was set up during the revolutionary government of President Aquino, the PCGG was already perceived as a corrupt agency.

Its officials enjoyed immense perks and privileges from sequestered corporations. Even the sons and daughters of PCGG officials allegedly enjoyed the same benefits accorded their parents. That's the reason why despite its many years of existence, the PCGG has not confiscated substantial amounts of ill-gotten wealth from the Marcoses.

How could the PCGG do its job when its officials are allegedly being dined, wined and "womened" by owners of sequestered property and wealth?

* * *

I visited Ronaldo "Jeff" Quesada, the completely crippled man sentenced recently to life imprisonment for rape by a Bulacan judge, at the provincial jail in Malolos. I asked him his reaction to the impossible verdict. "I hope I die soon. I can't take this anymore," said Jeff.

How could a quadriplegic—one who can't move both hands and both feet and who can't leave his wheelchair—commit rape?

I hope Judge Andres B. Soriano is able to sleep at night.

* * *

How could Judge Soriano believed the allegation of the complainant that Jeff's cousin, Iza Ocampo, helped in the commission of the alleged crime by helping him commit the act? Judge Soriano should have used his common sense. Or does he have any?

METROBRIEFS

Two inmates killed

TWO inmates at the San Juan Municipal Jail were killed yesterday when one of them allegedly smashed the head of the other with a piece of wood before ending up being mauled to death by the rest of the inmates. The almost 40 inmates inside one of the two detention cells at the municipal jail were sleeping at about 3:30 a.m. yesterday when they were awakened by a commotion. They saw Rafael David, 38, repeatedly hitting the head of fellow inmate Delberto dela Cruz, 34, with a four-inch long piece of wood. The other inmates allegedly tried to pacify David, but when he turned his ire on them, they beat him up. In the end, both David and Dela Cruz were killed, jail warden Chief Insp. Noel Montalvo told the INQUIRER. Montalvo and investigators later found out from his relatives and neighbors that David could have been suffering from a mental illness as he had been admitted several times to the National Center for Mental Health.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Drunken talk led to arrest

HIS mouth gave him away. The principal suspect in the killing of an agent of the National Bureau of Investigation more than a decade ago was arrested in Caloocan City last week after he boasted during a drinking spree that his exploit had made him "untouchable." NBI acting Director Nestor Mantaring identified the suspect as Joselito "Tisoy" Velasco, 41, of Centro Street, 9th Avenue, Caloocan City. According to NBI Deputy Director for Intelligence Services Edmundo Arugay, an informant called the bureau's Counter Intelligence Division headed by head agent Regner Pineza regarding Velasco's whereabouts. The informant told investigators that Velasco had bragged that he was invincible because he had already killed an NBI agent. Armed with a warrant of arrest for homicide issued by Antipolo Regional Trial Court Judge Pablito Rojas, the NBI agents arrested Velasco in his house last May 17. Velasco later admitted that he killed NBI agent Danilo Pago in 1992 during a heist. The suspect said the victim fought back when he and his cohorts tried to rob him inside a taxi cab.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Teachers' building to open soon

DESPITE opposition from environment advocates, local government and school officials in Manila will push through with the inauguration of a building for teachers inside the Arroceros Forest Park on June 20. The event will be part of a series of activities to be conducted by the city government to mark Manila's 435th foundation day on June 24. However, the park, which has been renamed the People's Botanical Park, will remain closed to the public even after the inauguration. "We have yet to complete the beautification and cleaning process before we allow people to frequent the park," said Ma. Luisa Quinones, Division of City Schools superintendent. Winner Foundation, the park caretaker, has sued the city government for constructing the building.

Tina G. Santos

More freedom parks

EVEN without a permit, militant groups and other cause-oriented organizations can freely gather and express their sentiments in two more freedom parks in Makati. City Hall announced yesterday that the City Council has passed a resolution declaring as freedom parks the parking area in front of the Makati Central Fire Station on Ayala Avenue extension corner Malugay Street and the adjacent park on the corner of Gil Puyat and Ayala Avenues.

Tarra V. Quismundo

Bring your own food

BRING your own "baon." (packed lunch). Pasay City health officials offered this advice to students the other day in preparation for their return to school next month. According to the City Health Office, by bringing their own food, they will be protected from food-borne diseases like cholera and typhoid fever. "Children often get sick from the food they buy from sidewalk vendors. We suggest that the parents find the time to prepare their children's food," Neil Sabino, a sanitation inspector, told the INQUIRER. The city's 15 sanitation inspectors will be fielded starting next week to the more than 20 public and private schools in the city to check on food stalls put up near the schools, Sabino said.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Floral art workshop

A SEMINAR-WORKSHOP on flower arrangements for special occasions with Ikebana teacher Serapion Metilla is ongoing until May 28 from 1 to 6 p.m. at the Metts Plant Arts, King Louis Garden Center, Manila Seedling Bank, located at the corner of Edsa and Quezon Avenue. All materials will be provided including pruning scissors, vases, flowers, foliage, floral foam wires, tapes, ribbons and snacks. Senior citizens will be given a 10 percent discount. For more details, call 9394593, 4352479 or 0917-8321352.

They want bail, too

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF their alleged leader, actor and former Quezon City Rep. Dennis Roldan, the four co-accused in the kidnapping of a boy in Pasig City last year, have also filed their own applications for bail.

Unlike Roldan, however, the four—Romeo Orcajada, Adrian Domingo, Noel San Andres and his wife Rowena—did not present their own set of witnesses to justify their applications. Instead, they asked the Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 261 to adopt the evidence presented during the bail hearings for Roldan.

Judge Agnes Reyes-Carpio, meanwhile, ordered Orcajada and Domingo to submit their memorandums before their applications could be considered submitted for resolution.

However, she junked the "manifestation" of San Andres and his wife Rowena, who is expected to give birth any time.

The request, which lawyer Dodjie Encinas filed only three days ago, was in the form of a "manifestation" instead of a formal motion.

Kidnapping is non-bailable but Roldan and his four fellow accused said that the evidence against them was weak.

Roldan, whose real name is Mitchell Gumabao, is accused of masterminding the kidnapping of a 3-year-old Chinese-Filipino boy last year. He had already filed his own application for bail and the motion is expected to be resolved next month.

His lawyers have also submitted their memorandums and formal offers of exhibits to justify his application.

The prosecution presented at least 10 witnesses during the bail hearings, including policemen who testified they saw Roldan in the safe houses where the boy was brought, and the boy's mother who claimed she had negotiated with Roldan for her son's release.

The prosecution also presented two cell phones and SIM cards, used in the negotiations as reflected in the phone of the boy's mother, which the police said they had recovered in Roldan's house in Quezon City when he was arrested last year.

The defense has presented only two witnesses to support the bail application. San Andres and Orcajada said they never saw Roldan nor did they hear his name during the almost two weeks the kidnap victim was with them. They instead pointed at accused Octavio Garces and suspect turned state witness Alberto Pagdanganan as the masterminds.

Garces, who had tagged Roldan in his statements to the police, had also filed a motion for bail during the start of the hearings last year. He did not present any witnesses to support his application. Roldan, San Andres and his wife Rowena, Orcajada and Domingo are detained at the Pasig City Jail while Garces is detained at the Philippine National Police Custodial Service.

Suzette Wang, Roldan's alleged girlfriend, also alleged as mastermind, remains at large.

100 feared dead in Thai flash floods

PM Thaksin blames devastation on illegal logging in the region

UTTARADIT, THAILAND—RELIEF teams Wednesday pulled more corpses from receding floodwaters in northern Thailand, where officials fear about 100 people were killed in floods and mudslides.

"One hundred dead is our preliminary estimate, but we are still receiving reports of missing people," Suksan Wanaputi, acting governor of the hardest-hit province of Uttaradit, told AFP.

Mudslides blocked roads to Lab Lae district, where many of the victims are believed to have been swept away by the floodwaters or buried in the mud in the mountainous region, he said.

Up to two meters of water still covered the streets in parts of the province, he added.

So far 30 bodies had been pulled from the mud and water that covered roads and homes, while 77 people were reported missing and feared dead, the disaster management agency said.

"We think that the number of dead and missing are likely to rise," a disaster official told AFP.

The nearby provinces of Nan, Phrae, Lampang and Sukhothai were also hit by the floods after unusually early monsoon rains drenched northern Thailand at the weekend.

Some 1,200 people have been evacuated, while more than 75,000 have suffered damage either to their homes or their farms, the disaster agency said.

At least 168 homes were destroyed in the floods, while 25 schools, temples or government buildings were damaged, it added.

THAI rescuers sift through the debris in search for bodies of flash flood victims in Uttaradit province, northern Thailand, May 24. AP

Some 1,000 people who had been stranded at the Den Chai train station in Phrae province were rescued late Tuesday and brought to Bangkok, the State Railway of Thailand said.

But services on lines running north from Bangkok to the city of Chiang Mai were suspended for a second day, railways spokesperson Monthskarn Srivilasa said.

"The floods have inundated the rail lines in the north and the water is still high. We have to wait until it recedes so we can repair the tracks," Monthskarn said.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra inspected relief efforts Wednesday, touring one inundated school and flying over the flood-hit provinces by helicopter.

Before leaving Bangkok, he said he had authorized the military and police to send heavy equipment to help clear roads and vowed government aid for the flooded region.

Thaksin also blamed the devastation in part on illegal logging in the region, where clear-cutting has left many hillsides barren.

"There is frequently illegal logging in that area and officials have tried to solve the problem. We did manage to arrest a few people recently," he told reporters.

Thaksin made the trip just one day after he formally returned to office. Seven weeks ago, he stepped aside in the wake of street protests and a controversial election that has since been invalidated by the courts. *AFP*

Bombs kill 25 in Baghdad

BAGHDAD—BOMBS KILLED AT least 25 people in Baghdad on Tuesday, police said, in separate attacks that underlined the security challenge facing Iraq's still incomplete government.

A bomb hidden in a motorcycle exploded outside a Shiite mosque in the Tunis district of the capital, killing at least 11 people in a nearby sandwich shop.

Police said the mosque was empty so the target was unclear in the blast, which also wounded eight people.

It was one of a number of attacks across the country, including two car bombs in Baghdad—one aimed at police commandos that killed five civilians and another in Shiite east Baghdad which took the same number of lives.

Those explosions wounded at least 20 people and police said another bomb killed at least four people and wounded nine at a Baghdad bakery.

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, who is trying to fill the interior and defense ministry posts to complete a government announced last week, told Iraqi television he expects to submit the names to parliament on Saturday.

Political sources said the main Shiite and Sunni Arab alliances had been exchanging names of their candidates. The Sunni Iraqi Accordance Front denied media reports the new culture minister from their bloc had already quit.

Maliki, a tough-talking Shiite Islamist, has vowed to use "maximum force" to wipe out Sunni insurgents fighting to topple Iraq's US-backed leaders. He has also opened a door to negotiations with those willing to join the political process. *Reuters*

Pope to trace predecessor's footsteps in Poland

VATICAN CITY—POPE BENEDICT XVI will walk in his predecessor's footsteps on Thursday when he begins a four-day trip to Poland, homeland of John Paul II and a European bastion of fervent Roman Catholicism.

More than just a prayerful homage to his beloved mentor, the German Pontiff's second foreign visit as pope will take on a huge personal significance when he visits the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz on Sunday, in what many expect will be the emotional highlight of his trip.

Much as John Paul—revered as a saint in Poland—would have been expected to do, Benedict is likely to use the trip to call on Poles to bolster opposition to growing secularism in Europe and block social reforms perceived as damaging to the family, held by the Vatican to be society's bedrock.

The Vatican is pinning its hopes on traditionally Catholic countries like Poland, Spain and Italy to help turn back a tide of secularism seen as swamping Christianity.

The world now knows that Benedict—simply Joseph Ratzinger, archbishop of Munich when he accompanied John Paul II to the camp in 1979—was an unwilling member of Hitler Youth as a 14-year-old and later an anti-aircraft gunner, before deserting the German army.

At the time, his predecessor, the former Karol Wojtyla, was already a young seminarian, clandestinely exercising his spiritual vocation under the noses of Poland's Nazi occupiers.

Now, a year after John Paul II's death, Benedict's visit is being seen as an instrument which could help to heal old wounds between Poland and Germany, 61 years after the end of World War II which bitterly divided the European neighbors.

Polish primate Cardinal Jozef Glemp has said the visit will improve relations between the two peoples, still with wounds to heal after Hitler's invasion of Poland in September 1939.

Benedict's visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau, on the outskirts of the southern Polish town of Oswiecim, will be "a very important visit for relations between Catholics and Jews," and a continuation of the reconciliation begun by John Paul, Poland's President Lech Kaczynski said.

Kaczynski said the visit would also be "a tribute to the victims of a totalitarian system created by the Germans, particularly to the victims of the Holocaust."

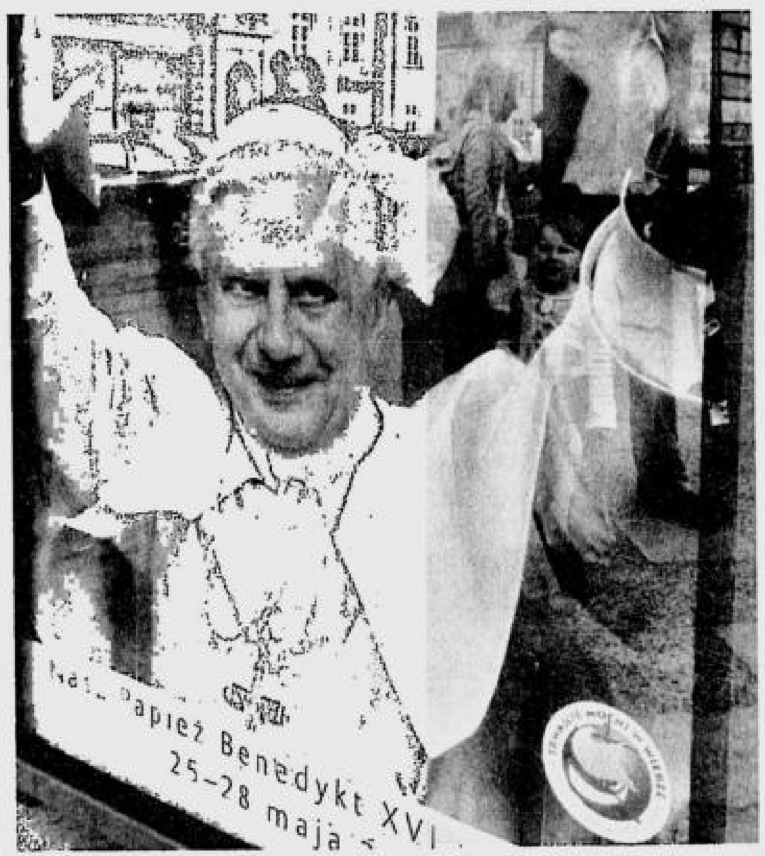
Scheduled to fly to Poland on Thursday, the 79-year-old Benedict is expected to make six public appearances during his four-day visit, only his second overseas trip since he was elected pope on April 19 last year.

Hundreds of thousands of devout Poles are expected to turn out for an open air Mass which Benedict will celebrate on Friday in Warsaw's Pilsudski Square.

The Pope will then travel to Czestochowa in southern Poland, home to the icon of the Black Madonna and a favorite place of pilgrimage for Poland's Catholics, including his predecessor.

On Saturday, Benedict will visit the town of Wadowice, where his predecessor was born Karol Wojtyla in May 1920; Kalwaria Zebrydowska, where the young Wojtyla used to pray with his father; and then Krakow, the city where Wojtyla was ordained and served as archbishop before his election as pope in 1978.

On Sunday, Benedict will celebrate his second huge Mass at the Blonia esplanade in Krakow, before going to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the Nazis' biggest and most cruelly efficient death camp. *AFP*



PEOPLE are reflected in a poster announcing the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Warsaw Tuesday, May 23. AP

WorldBriefs

Congo arrests 30 in coup plot

KINSHASA—The Democratic Republic of Congo said on Wednesday it had arrested about 30 foreigners, including Nigerians, Americans and South Africans, in a suspected coup plot ahead of elections scheduled for July 30. "About 30 people claiming to work for a security company have been arrested. They say they were working for the company but our information suggests they had other intentions," government spokesperson Henri Mova Sakanyi told Reuters. "They wanted to destabilize the institutions of the country, that means a coup attempt." "There are Nigerians, Americans and South Africans. They will be tried in court," he said. *Reuters*

Bird flu spreads in Romania

BUCHAREST—Romania's agriculture minister urged Bucharest residents not to panic Tuesday after the bird flu virus surfaced in 44 locations, including two in the capital, since reappearing here 10 days ago. Possible contamination in around 30 other locations, including one in Bucharest, has been identified over the last 24 hours. Before this wave of new cases, bird flu had been confirmed in over 60 villages in Romania since October. Agriculture Minister Gheorghe Flutur told residents in the capital "not to give in to panic," and called on district mayors to "deal with this crisis responsibly." *AFP*

60 Taliban rebels killed in Afghan battle

KABUL—About 60 Taliban fighters and four Afghan government soldiers were killed in a battle in the southern province of Uruzgan, a news agency reported on Wednesday. The commander of Afghan forces in the south, Gen. Rahmatullah Raufi, said the battle occurred on Tuesday evening and the bodies of about 60 militants had been found, the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press said. The general was not immediately available for comment. An Interior Ministry spokesperson in Kabul said he had heard 10 Taliban were killed in the battle on the outskirts of the Uruzgan provincial capital, Tirin Kot. *Reuters*

Aziz testifies in Saddam trial

BAGHDAD—Former Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz took the stand to testify for Saddam Hussein as the ousted president's trial resumed on Wednesday. Aziz, whose family earlier this year said he was seriously ill, looked tired as he testified in the courtroom in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone where Saddam and his seven co- defendants are standing trial. Aziz is not among those accused. Seeking to turn the tables in the trial that got under way in October, Aziz said current government officials should be in the dock instead, accusing one of the now ruling Shi'ite parties of having tried to kill him and Saddam in the 1980s. *Reuters*

Mutant mice might challenge heredity laws

PARIS—MUTANT MICE WITH spotty tails have thrown down the gauntlet to assumptions about heredity.

Experiments by French researchers suggest that RNA, until now seen as a workhorse molecule in animals, can stealthily transport genetic instructions from one generation to the next.

RNA, or ribonucleic acid, is a single-strand molecule that holds genetic code in certain viruses, such as those that cause influenza and AIDS.

Among animals, though, its job is far more modest. It transfers information from DNA—the famous code for making life—and helps make proteins, the stuff of life itself.

A team led by Minoo Rassoulzadegan of the National Institute of Health and Medical Research (Inserm) engineered laboratory mice so that they had a variation in a gene called Kit.

This variation gave the mice white spots on their tails. The mice had a mutant version and a normal version in the two copies of their Kit gene.

The scientists then crossed these mice with others with normal Kit genes.

Of the mice that were born, some had both copies of the normal Kit genes—yet, remarkably, they also had the white spots. In addition, the white spots were transmitted to the next generation of mice, even though these rodents too had the normal genes.

How could this have happened? Under the laws of inheritance, set down in the 19th century by Austrian monk Gregor Mendel, offspring can only get the genetic code exactly as it is handed on from their parents.

By all rights, if the mice both had normal Kit genes, their tails should have been reassuringly spotless.

Rassoulzadegan suggests the answer to this mystery lies in RNA.

The mutant version of Kit produces unexpectedly large numbers of aberrantly sized "messenger" RNA, she found. In addition, the sperm of mutant mice also, surprisingly, was found to have accumulations of RNA.

Intrigued by this, her team injected RNA from mutant cells into normal embryos—and, presto, spotted-tail mice were born.

The hypothesis is that RNA is carried in the mouse's sperm, and at fertilization it "silences" the activity of the normal Kit gene. This happens not only in the offspring but in subsequent generations too. *AFP*

US Senate backs job verification for immigrants

WASHINGTON—THE SENATE voted Tuesday to require employers to use a vast new employment verification system that would allow businesses to distinguish between legal and illegal workers.

Employers would be required to enter the Social Security numbers or immigrant identification numbers of all job applicants, including citizens, into the computerized system, which would be created by the Department of Homeland Security. The system would notify businesses within three days whether the applicant was authorized to work in the United States.

Those job applicants determined to be illegal would have to be fired. The measure, approved 58-40, is included in a bill that would legalize the vast majority of the nation's illegal immigrants, which is expected to pass the Senate later this week.

The new requirements would result in a broad operational shift for employers who have relied almost entirely on the collection of identity documents to determine the legal status of their workers. The measure is considered a linchpin of the current immigration legislation because it is designed to deter illegal immigration by making it extremely difficult for undocumented immigrants to find work.

Without such a provision, senators say, US businesses would remain a powerful magnet for millions of illegal immigrants. The legislation calls for creating documents that would be resistant to counterfeiting for legal immigrants and stiff fines for violations by employers. It requires the verification system to be operational and in use by all businesses within 18 months once Congress appropriates the money for it.

Critics say the legislation would increase the burdens on asylum seekers, eliminate federal review of deportation orders and allow asylum seekers to be deported even while their claims were under review by federal courts.

Difficult negotiations lie ahead between the Senate and House, where many Republicans strongly oppose legalization of illegal immigrants. *New York Times News Service*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bin Laden admits masterminding 9/11

Says Moussaoui had no role in the attacks

PARIS—OSAMA BIN Laden said he masterminded the Sept. 11 attacks and that convicted Frenchman Zacarias Moussaoui had no part in them, according to an audio recording released Tuesday.

"I am responsible for assigning the roles of the 19 brothers to conduct these conquests and I did not order Zacarias to be with those on this mission," said the voice in the recording which claimed to be the terror group leader.

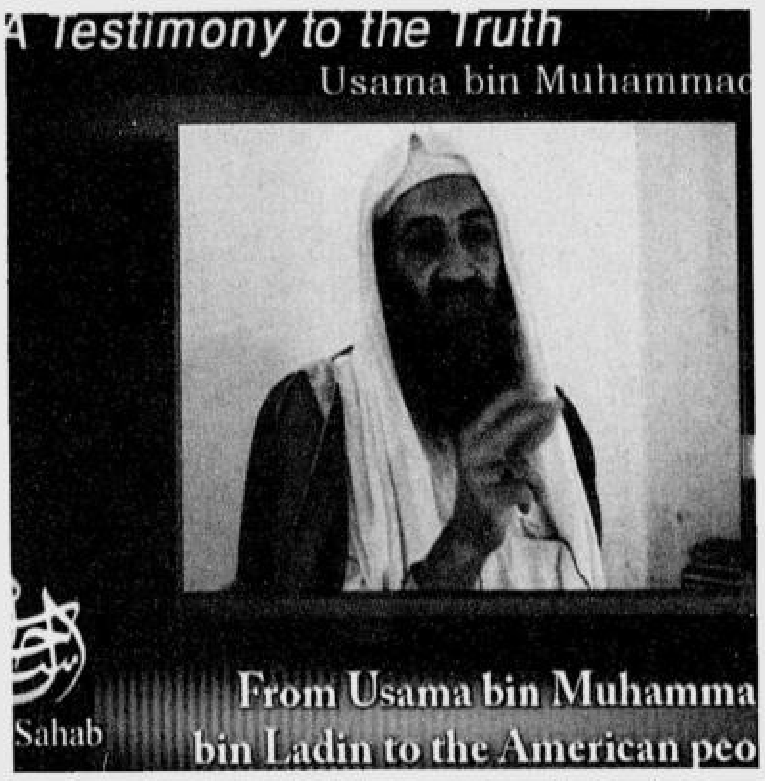
In Washington, a US official said the intelligence service had no reason to doubt the authenticity of the recording.

Moussaoui, a 37-year-old Frenchman of Moroccan origin, is the only man convicted over the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. He was sentenced this month at a court in Alexandria, Virginia, to life imprisonment.

"His confession that he was assigned to participate in those raids is a false confession," said the recording on the As-Sahab Internet site, frequently used by al-Qaida.

The message was accompanied by a photograph of Bin Laden and the transcript of his message in English.

"No intelligent person doubts (the confession) is a result of the pressure put upon him for the past four and a half years," the message continued.



THIS IMAGE taken from a website frequently used by Islamic militants shows al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden purportedly saying in an audio tape May 23 that neither Zacarias Moussaoui—the only person convicted in the US for the Sept. 11 attacks—nor anyone held at Guantanamo had anything to do with the al-Qaida operation. AP

A counterterrorism official said US intelligence is reviewing the tape and performing technical analysis to determine whether it's authentic.

"But what I would tell you is that at this point there is no reason to doubt that it is authentic," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The official said Bin Laden might have been responding a statement March 27 by Zacarias Moussaoui claiming that Bin Laden ordered him to fly a fifth hijacked plane into the White House on Sept. 11.

The tape was a propaganda message aimed at showing that Bin Laden was relevant and on top of current events, the official said.

Bin Laden had claimed responsibility for the Sept. 11 attack before, "but he may feel a need to say it again as part of his continuing propaganda campaign," the official said.

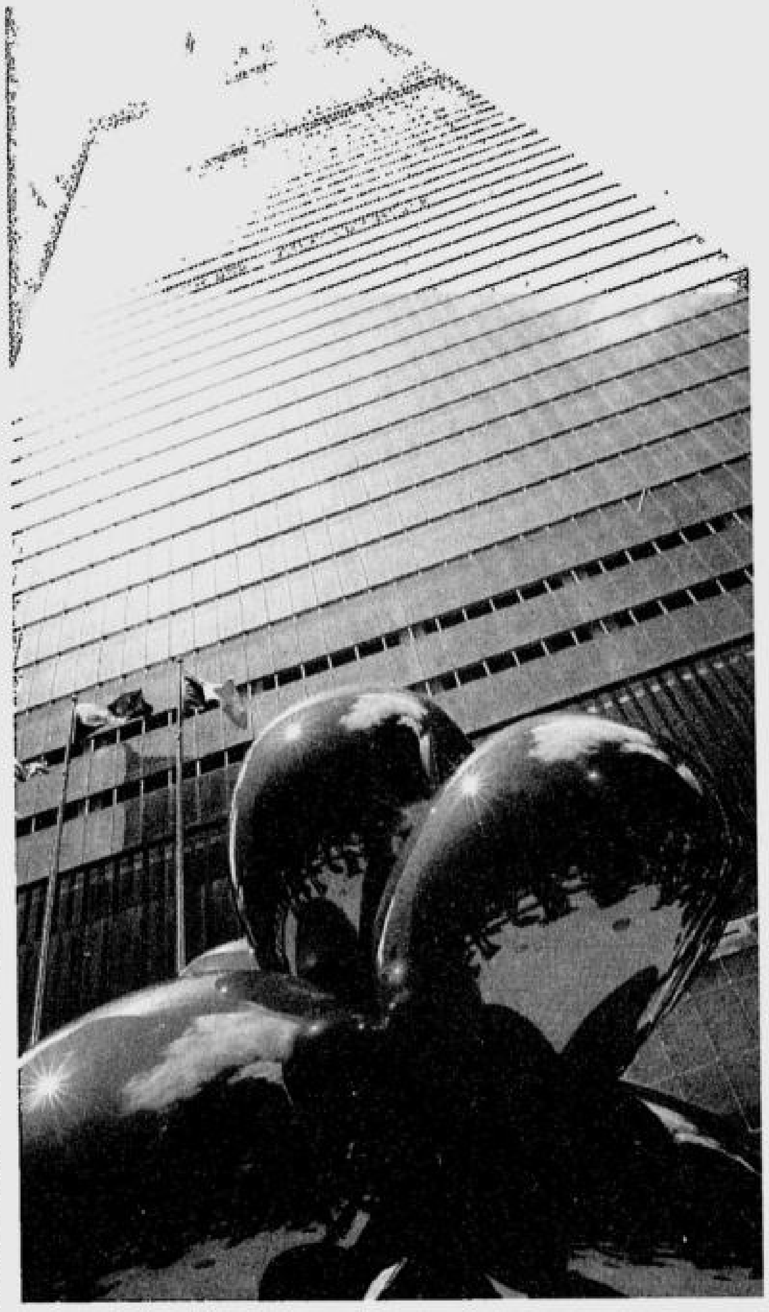
A US judge this month formally sentenced Moussaoui to life imprisonment without parole for his role in the Sept. 11 conspiracy, after a jury rejected the death penalty.

The jury ruled on May 3 that Moussaoui should be imprisoned for life for failing to inform US authorities about what he knew of al-Qaida plans to carry out the attacks.

The Bin Laden voice recalled that "Brother Moussaoui" was arrested two weeks before the 9/11 attacks, saying that if he had been linked to those events then the suicide attackers would have left the United States immediately before their plans were uncovered.

According to the recording, Bin Laden also said that prisoners held at the US base at Guantanamo in Cuba "have no links with the events of Sept. 11," and that "many of them have no connection with al-Qaida in the first place, and even more amazing is that some of them oppose al-Qaida's methodology of calling for war with America."

"Bush and his administration are aware of this fact, but they avoid mentioning it, for reasons not hidden to the discerning. Among these reasons is that it is necessary to create justifications for the massive spending of hundreds of billions on the Defense Department and other agencies in their war against the Mujahideen." *AFP*



ARTIST Jeff Koons' sculpture "Flowery Balloon (red)" is seen against the backdrop of 7 World Trade Center after the opening of the building in lower Manhattan, May23, in New York. It was the last building to be lost on Sept. 11, 2001, and the first to be rebuilt on the site. AFP

First skycraper near Ground Zero opens its doors for business

NEW YORK—A SKYscraper rebuilt from scratch after being badly damaged in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks here opened its doors for business Tuesday, to the sounds of rock singer Lou Reed, who took the opportunity to air a few political jibes.

DEVELOPER Larry Silverstein (right) and artist Jeff Koons smile after the unveiling of Koons' sculpture. AFP

The 52-story building, 7 World Trade Center, sits on the perimeter of the gaping hole in lower Manhattan known as Ground Zero, where the World Trade Center's twin towers, twice as high, once stood.

Five years on, construction on Ground Zero has barely begun.

Property developer Larry Silverstein, the leaseholder of the WTC site, called the inauguration of the new building Tuesday "a day of tremendous pride and satisfaction for me."

Several hundred people turned out to see Silverstein cut the building's red ribbon and witness the symbolic first revival of the area, destroyed by two hijacked passenger planes.

At Ground Zero itself, construction of the first building, The Freedom Tower, which is to rise 541 meters, its height reflecting the year of American independence, began less than a month ago.

The launch of the project had been mired in heated debate by politicians and financiers. The project, which will include several skyscrapers and a memorial, is expected to be completed in 2012.

"We all have the same motives, we want to get this done," Kenneth Ringler, executive director of The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which owns the Ground Zero site, said Tuesday at the inaugural ceremony.

But the targeted neighborhood faces the specter of weak demand for its buildings.

The test-case, 7 World Trade Center, opened with about 30 floors unoccupied. Silverstein, however, predicted that it would be fully let by mid-2007.

After the speeches, several musicians celebrated the opening, including Suzanne Vega and New York icon, singer-songwriter Lou Reed.

Reed, performing solo on guitar, sang his classics "Perfect Day and "Sweet Jane" and peppered his act with commentary about the heated New York real estate market and US politics. *AFP*

World powers meet on Iran nuke offer

LONDON—WORLD POWERS meet in London on Wednesday to discuss a package of incentives and threats drafted by European countries aimed at defusing a crisis over Iran's disputed nuclear program.

Senior officials from UN Security Council permanent members China, Russia, the United States, France and Britain, plus Germany, will try to narrow divisions over how to proceed to persuade Tehran to halt its uranium enrichment work.

Washington and some western nations suspect Iran's nuclear program is a cover for efforts to develop an atomic bomb. But the Islamic Republic says it is developing nuclear technology for civilian power generation.

Officials will discuss an offer of incentives and warnings hammered out by the European Union trio.

US President George W. Bush said the countries had to work together to encourage Tehran to halt its nuclear program.

"Obviously we'd like to solve this issue peacefully and diplomatically, and the more the Iranians refuse to negotiate in good faith the more countries are beginning to realize that we must continue to work together," Bush said at a news conference on Tuesday with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

But Bush said Iran had so far not shown signs of agreeing.

"We're spending a lot of time working with our Russian friends in particular to make it clear to them that Iran is showing no good faith," Bush said.

British Foreign Minister Margaret Beckett told parliament on Tuesday: "It is the intention to encourage Iran to see the nature of the choice that lies before it."

The package is likely to include an offer of a light-water reactor and an assured supply from abroad of fuel for civilian atomic plants so Iran would not have to enrich uranium itself.

Enriched uranium can be used as a nuclear fuel, but is also a key component of atomic weapons.

The package will also warn of possible sanctions if Iran, the world's fourth-biggest oil producer, refuses the offer.

Diplomats say they would first discuss targeted sanctions, such as visa bans on officials involved in the nuclear program, before seeking ways of curtailing trade deals.

Some EU officials, analysts and the UN's nuclear watchdog—the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—want Washington to engage with Iran.

They believe the only way of enticing Iran back to negotiations and getting it to stop its sensitive nuclear work would be a US pledge that it would not try to topple the Tehran government.

IAEA chief ElBaradei will hold talks with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on the matter.

"ElBaradei will reiterate to the Americans that Washington needs to engage Iran directly," said a senior Vienna diplomat familiar with his thinking and IAEA operations in Iran.

"EU3 engagement is ultimately incomplete since only the US can resolve Middle East security and trade issues at the heart of this standoff."

He said ElBaradei may try to impress on Washington that it is unrealistic to demand Iran goes back to zero on enrichment work.

Iran has said it will not stop its nuclear work, even for incentives.

There is also discord within the Security Council permanent members with the United States much keener to pursue sanctions swiftly if Iran declines the offer than China and Russia. *Reuters*

Egypt to excavate submerged Roman city

CAIRO—THE EGYPTIAN AUthorities have given the go ahead for the underwater exploration of what appears to be a Roman city submerged in the Mediterranean, Egypt's top archaeologist said on Monday.

Zahi Hawass said in a statement that an excavation team had found the ruins of the Roman city 35 km east of the Suez Canal on Egypt's north coast.

Archaeologists had found buildings, bathrooms, ruins of a Roman fortress, ancient coins, bronze vases and pieces of pottery that all date back to the Roman era, the statement said.

Egypt's Roman era lasted from 30 BC to 337 AD.

The excavation team also found four bridges that belonged to a submerged castle, part of which had been discovered on the Mediterranean coastline in 1910.

The statement said evidence indicated that part of the site was on the coast and part of it submerged in the sea. The area marked Egypt's eastern border during the Roman era. *Reuters*

Bush open to Israel's plan to fix Jewish state borders

BUSH AFP

WASHINGTON—US PRESIDENT George W. Bush held his first summit Tuesday with new Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and expressed openness to his plan to fix the Jewish state's final borders unilaterally if necessary.

Bush called the plan "bold" and said it could be an "important step" in the stalled Mideast peace process clouded by the election of the militant group Hamas to run the Palestinian government. But he stressed any final settlement must be negotiated.

Olmert said at a joint news conference that Israel was committed to the US-sponsored peace "roadmap" aimed at creation of a Palestinian state but could not wait indefinitely for the Hamas-led Palestinians to change.

Even though the leaders' statements had been carefully coordinated in meetings senior US and Israeli officials had held over the past week, members of the Israeli delegation expressed great satisfaction with the summit's outcome.

"Bush's statements were an important step toward promoting Olmert's plan," senior Israeli adviser Dov Weissglas told reporters.

"We were very pleased with the president's statements over the Iranian threat, and extremely pleased with those on the convergence plan," Olmert adviser Assi Shariv told AFP.

The White House talks, described as a getting-acquainted session, were the first US-Israeli summit held since Olmert assumed the helm in Israel after polls in March.

Olmert campaigned on a platform of fixing Israel's borders by 2010 with or without the Palestinians, following up last year's pullout from Gaza with new withdrawals from most Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

"I would call them bold ideas," Bush told reporters Tuesday. "The prime minister's ideas could be an important step toward the peace we both support."

But the US president underscored that any settlement "will be only achieved on the basis of mutually agreed changes, and no party should prejudice the outcome of negotiations on a final status agreement."

Until the emergence of Hamas, which Washington considers a terrorist organization, US officials had consistently warned Israel against taking any unilateral action that would compromise final-status negotiations.

But referring to Hamas' refusal to renounce armed struggle against Israel, Bush reiterated that "no country can be expected to make peace with those who deny its right to exist and who use terror to attack its population." *AFP*

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WHAT'S INSIDE
- Miami makes Detroit feel the Heat /A24

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- China Taiwan clobber foes in Asian volley /A23

RP chessers bow to US a sixth time

By Roy Luarca

TURIN, ITALY—SAME plot, same result—the Filipinos yielding to the Americans, 2.5-1.5. And it's been that way in their last six meetings in the Chess Olympiad.

The Americans tried to revise the script and make their win even more convincing in Round 3 of the 37th edition of the event Tuesday.

Grandmaster Eugene Torre, however, flashed his endgame mastery and salvaged a draw with super GM Alexander Onischuk (Elo 2650) on board 2 to duplicate the outcome of the RP-US matches in 1980 (Valleta), 1984 (Thessaloniki), 1988 (Thessaloniki), 2000 (Istanbul) and 2002 (Bled).

Grandmasters Mark Paragua and Rogelio Antonio Jr. also did their share, halving the point with Super GMs Gata Kamsky (2671) and Hikaru Nakamura (2664) on board 1 and board 3, respectively.

Fide Master Oliver Dimakiling was the lone casualty, bowing to GM Varuzan Arobian after 38 moves of a Bogo Indian.

The defeat pulled the Filipinos down to a share of 34th to 44th places with 7.5 points in the 146-team men's field.

The Filipinas, on the other hand, continued their climb with a 2-1 victory over Switzerland.

Woman International Masters Sheerie Joy Lomibao and Beverly Mendoza hurdled their rivals on boards 1 and 3, respectively, to compensate for the defeat of Sherily Cua to WGM Barbara Hund on board 2.

Lomibao trounced WIM Gundula Heinatz while Mendoza notched her second straight victory at the expense of Anastassia Gavrilova.

The 54-year-old Torre, who became Asia's first GM in 1974 when the Filipinos held the Americans to a 2-2 tie, defended well against Onischuk, who was unable to traslate a one pawn advantage into a win after 95 moves of an Irregular opening.

The game lasted nearly five hours and the two were the last to leave the cavernous playing hall the size of two football fields.

"By the skin of my teeth," said Torre, who's playing in his 19th straight Olympiad. "I had to be careful and precise up to the end."

The 22-year-old Paragua, undaunted by his foe's stature as former world challenger, even tried to lure Kamsky out of the safe lines but it was still a clear draw as their bishops were of opposite colors.

Antonio, on the other hand, enjoyed

RP CHESSERS/ A23

STANDINGS AFTER ROUND 3

Men: 10.5 points—China, Russia, Uzbekistan; 10—Ukraine, Netherlands, Greece; 9.500—Bulgaria, Brazil, Armenia, Norway, Ireland, Spain; 9—Germany, Georgia, Hungary, Poland, India; 8.5—United States, Vietnam, Moldova, Croatia, Egypt, England, Turkey, Indonesia, Israel; 8—Estonia, Romania, Canada, Switzerland, Slovenia, France, Colombia; 7.5—Philippines, Qatar, Slovakia, Belarus, Latria, Denmark, Australia, Argentina, Albania, Andorra, Macedonia

Women: 9.0—Lithuania, 8.5—Russia, China; 8—Ukraine, Romania; 7.5—United States, Bulgaria, Israel; 7—India; 6.5—Georgia, Slovenia, Germany, Hungary, France, Armenia, Ecuador, Greece, Belarus, Armenia, Uzbekistan; 6—Latvia, Mexico, Peru, Spain, Netherlands, Estonia, Turkey, Czech Republic, Serbia and Montenegro, Italy A, Sweden; 5.5—Philippines

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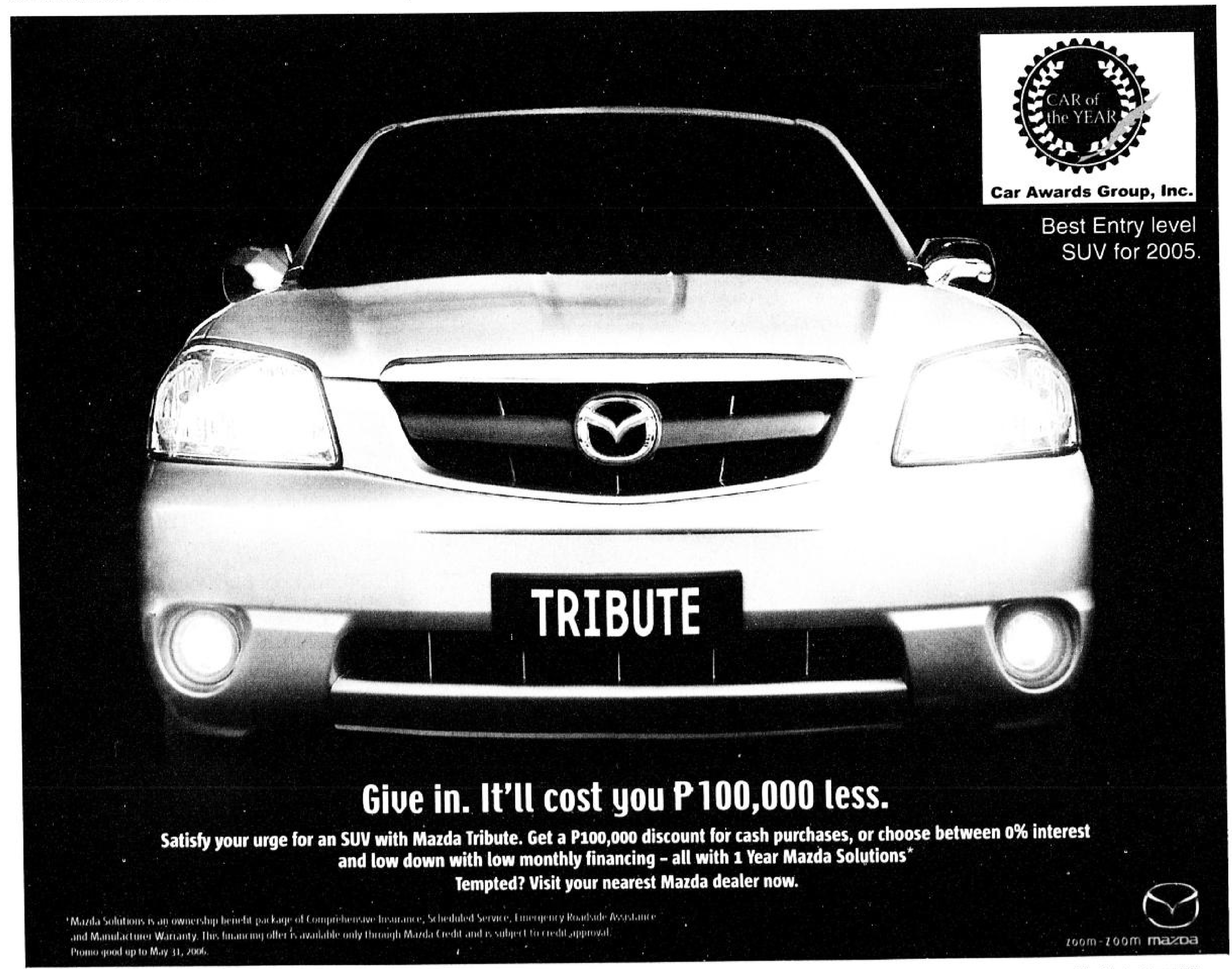

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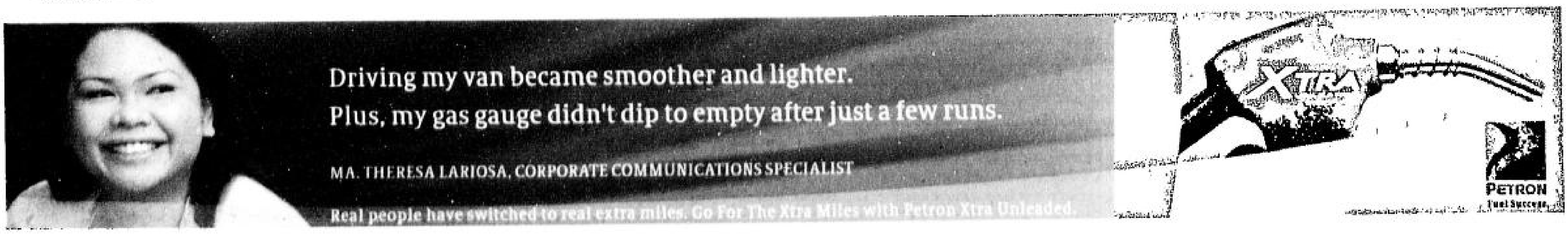
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90th RP Open tees off today; Pagunsan top favorite

PAGUNSAN

By Musong R. Castillo

ONLY IN HIS SECOND TOURNAMENT AS A pro in his home soil, Juvic Pagunsan can't help it if the spotlight is again on him.

The 90th edition of the Philippine Open tees off today at tough-as-nails Wack Wack East and everyone's eyes are focused on the 28-year-old Pagunsan as the brightest local hope.

He was, after all, the top amateur in the last two editions of the event, and the absence of the steadiest, most fearsome Filipino pro, Frankie Miñoza, made this a no-brainer.

"Of course, the pressure for me to perform is there," Pagunsan said in Filipino, a few moments after his practice round yesterday was suspended because of lightning and heavy rains.

"We (Filipino bets) all feel that we have a chance of winning," he added. "For me, I think the key is not to be greedy. I was over-aggressive in (the) Macau (Open last week, where he missed the cut after opening with a 70).

"But this is the Philippine Open, and I feel like an amateur again."

Pagunsan was the top amateur in the last two Opens, but it was by no means a distinction that meant that he did not have a shot at winning it all. He came closest in 2004 at The Riviera in Cavite, winding up second behind American Edward Michaels.

"All the experience I gained in all the years I played the Open as an amateur will help me here," Pagunsan, who won the multi-million The Country Club Invitational over Miñoza last February, added.

Angelo Que, winner of the Carlsberg Masters Vietnam in 2004, is also expected to be in the mix early along with Gerald Rosales, who finished second in Malarayat last year behind Aussie Adam Le Vesconte.

The East course will most likely play with preferred lie rules starting with the first round and most of the entries feel, Le Vesconte included, that the first 36 holes is the time to strike.

"Something close to 10-under wins it," Le Vesconte, who tees off in the 7:50 a.m. flight from the back nine, said. "That is if the weather stays this way, and the greens remain slow because of the rains."

The other Filipinos in the field of the event backed by ICTSI and Pagcor include former winners Cassius Casas and Robert Pactolerin.

3 RP shuttlers advance over Macau entries

By Marc Anthony Reyes

KENNEVIC ASUNCION, KARYN VELEZ AND IRENE CHIU DIDN'T DISAPPOINT THEIR countrymen last night, blasting their respective rivals from Macau to advance to the second round of the Bingo Bonanza Philippine Open badminton championships.

Asuncion, easily the most popular local shuttler, showcased the brand of game expected from him in ousting Macau's Lo Ion Wong, 21-6, 21-13, before a cheering crowd at the Philsports.

Sixteen-year-old Velez, the youngest campaigner here, overwhelmed Lao I Man, 21-12, 21-9, while 21-year-old Chiu handily booted out injured Pun Si Pui, 21-5, 21-4.

The victories assured Velez and Chiu of Asian circuit points in this four-star, $120,000 tournament presented by PLDT Business Solutions. But for them to get past the second round would be a terrific achievement.

Velez, an incoming high school junior at the nearby St. Paul's College-Pasig, is lined up against fourth seed Anu Nieminen of Finland, who bundled out Eva Lee of the United States, 19-21, 21-17, 21-3.

Chiu will be up against the top seed and World No. 4 Xu Huaiwen, a former Chinese now playing for Germany. Xu, 31, took a bye by virtue of her ranking which was boosted by victories in the Dutch Open, Bitburger Open, Finland World Grand Prix and Belgian International.

Asuncion, whose partnership with sister Kennie is the country's strongest hope here, will play Hong Kong's Chan Yan-kit.

THAILAND'S Ponsana Salakjit shows fine form in her maiden game. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

But five other locals fell—Owen Lopez, Rodel Bartolome, Wilson Frias and partners Alfredo Mailon and Therine Thristie Chan.

Bartolome fizzled after a fiery start and bowed to Anup Sridhar of India, who took an 11-21, 21-8, 22-20 decision.

Lopez found Vietnam's Nguyen Quang Minh too much to handle and lost, 8-21, 4-21, while Frias absorbed a 2-21, 5-21 pounding from Malaysia's Lee Tsuen Seng.

The mixed doubles pair of Mailon and Therine Thristie Chan took a 21-9, 21-12 beating from Japan's Ikue Tatani and Yusuke Shinkai.

Expert sees great July 2 encounter

MANNY PACQUIAO AND OSCAR LARIOS are poles apart.

But they can both be brutes, and are expected to put up a great fight when they clash in 12 rounds for the World Boxing Council international super featherweight crown on July 2 at the Araneta Coliseum.

This was how boxing manager Michael Koncz sized up the main protagonists in the Mano-A-Mano, Philippines versus Mexico showdown now catching attention like wildfire in the boxing world.

"Nobody trains as hard as Manny," said Koncz, the 45-year-old Canadian promoter of Bobby Pacquiao and Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista, and who lives just a short distance away from the Wild Card gym, where these Los Angeles-based Filipino boxers, including Pacquiao, train.

"Manny is 110 percent in great shape. Nobody can meet head-on with a tank that is Pacquiao."

The Pacquiao-Larios showdown will be on pay-per-view to be distributed live to the United States by IN-Demand, making it available to Direct-TV.

ABS-CBN, media partner of MP Promotions, will broadcast the fight internationally.

Olivarez takes on Alcantara in U-16 quarters

PHILIPPINE JUNIOR DAVIS CUPPER PABLO OLIvarez II and World Junior Championships veteran Francis Casey Alcantara scored easy wins yesterday to arrange a quarterfinal showdown in the boys' 18-under division of the 2006 Head Penn Tennis Tour at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Olivarez, the country's top 16-under player, breezed past Daniel Bautista, 6-2, 6-2, while Alcantara, Asia's best 14-under player, outclassed Cebuano Julius Lagman, 6-1, 6-0. In other matches, second seed Joshua Tan Ho downed Homer Paolo Perez, 6-1, 6-0, to advance against No. 7 Jose Lorenzo Opulencia, a 6-2, 6-3 winner over Reymund Padigos. Also gaining were No. 4 Russell Arcilla Jr., No. 5 El Santo Santos, No. 8 Akio Sy and unseeded Daniel Luis Macalino. In the boys' 12-under, No. 8 Al-Khady Jainul rallied past Aaron Boyon, 7-6 (3), 6-1, to advance in the quarterfinals against top seed Jacob Lagman, who blasted Reynaldo Dimao, 6-0, 6-0. Other winners were No. 2 Dheo Talatayod, No. 3 Juan Paolo Cansino, No. 5 Kurt Gerapusco, Angelo Joseph Rivero, Daniel Luis Macalino and Mark Escares.

Yanga new UAAP commish

YANGA

THE UNIVERSITY Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) has named Elmer Yanga, one of the more familiar figures in Philippine basketball, as basketball commissioner for Season 69 which kicks off July 8 at the Araneta Coliseum.

UAAP president Luz Sta. Ana and secretary Bren Perez of host University of the East made the announcement a day after the board approved Yanga's appointment during its meeting at Club Filipino in Greenhills Tuesday.

Named as Yanga's deputy was Ato Badolato, the basketball commissioner in Season 67.

Yanga brings with him a rich experience in basketball, having been directly involved with the sport for 23 years—11 years with the then Philippine Amateur Basketball League (now PBL) as team manager of RFM and another 12 years also as a team manager and governor of the RFM franchise in the PBA.

"The success of the basketball tournament this season will depend largely on the support of all the members and players in the league," said Yanga. "I know that some of our decisions may not be acceptable to all seven teams, but they can rest assured that these decisions will be well-thought of with the interest of the league as primary concern and guiding force."

Yanga is a graduate of Business Administration at UE in 1965. He passed the CPA licensure examinations in 1966.

Four share lead in boys' under-18 chess

PRE-TOURNAMENT PICKS IVAN GIL BIAG AND JAMES BULICATIN WERE HELD TO DRAWS AS FOUR players remained in the lead in the boys' under-18, even as Rulp Ylem Jose took the solo lead in the girls' division after five rounds Tuesday of the 2006 National Age Group Championships at the St. Francis Square in Mandaluyong City. Biag was held to a standoff by Steven Kim Yap, while Biag also split the point with Adrian Perez as the four remained in the lead with 4.5 points each in the tournament organized by the Metropolitan Chess Club in cooperation with the National Chess Federation of the Philippines. With four points apiece are 11 players, led by Paulo James Florendo, who downed Bon Mark Garcia in board 3.

SPORTSWATCH

YEAR OF THE YAO: Yao Ming, the 7-foot-6 Chinese who was the first pick of the Houston Rockets in the 2002-03 NBA season, is featured in a masterful documentary that tells a unique story of Eastern and Western cultures merging within the world of pro basketball. Narrated by Yao's interpreter Colin Pine, the Year of the Yao is now available on home video and is a must-see for all cage fans.

Crack entries in NCA 8-cock int'l derby

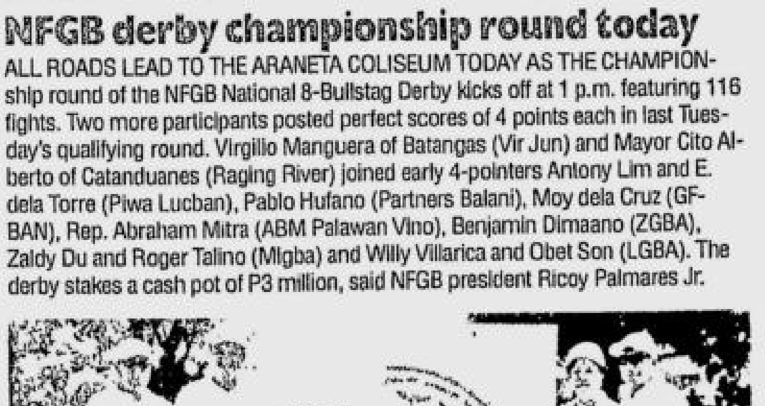
BIG NAMES IN THE WORLD OF COCKFIGHTING ARE SEEING ACTION IN THE National Cockers Association (NCA) International 8-Cock Derby slated May 29, 31 and June 2 at Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque. Entries to watch out for are those of Americans Joe Wolcott and Larry Whitehead, Dan Gray and Kenneth Eisenhower as well as the gamebirds of Manolo Lopez, Gerry Ramos, Iggy Arroyo, Ronnie Puno, Ito Ynares and Manny Pacquiao. The submission of weights for the derby's 2-cock elimination round is on May 28, and the second on May 30. Weights for the 4-cock championship round must be turned in on June 1. Lopez has been fielding exciting entries since NCA moved to its new home at the Roligon. Ramos, Arroyo, Ynares and Pacquiao also boast of fighting birds with tough blood lines, organizers said.

GCAP Cocker of the Year race heats up

JUN TOPACIO OF CAVITE, WITH HIS ENTRY JT EMERALD, REGAINED THE LEAD in the exciting race for the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) Cocker of the Year title last week at San Juan Coliseum. Topacio tallied a total of 26 points going into the GCAP 5-cock derby series on Tuesday next week. Rep. Prospero "Butch" Pichay and Rey Briones (Spartan's Pichay) slid into second place with 25.5 points in a tie with Patrick Antonio. Antonio is currently on a winning streak, having won the bigtime 5-cock derby last week at Gihulngan Cockpit Arena in Negros Occidental fielding the Kelso Roundheads of Boy Jiao which were trained under the Sagupaan training and conditioning method.

NFGB derby championship round today

ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE ARANETA COLISEUM TODAY AS THE CHAMPIONship round of the NFGB National 8-Bullstag Derby kicks off at 1 p.m. featuring 116 fights. Two more participants posted perfect scores of 4 points each in last Tuesday's qualifying round. Virgilio Manguera of Batangas (Vir Jun) and Mayor Cito Alberto of Catanduanes (Raging River) joined early 4-pointers Antony Lim and E. dela Torre (Piwa Lucban), Pablo Hufano (Partners Balani), Moy dela Cruz (GF-BAN), Rep. Abraham Mitra (ABM Palawan Vino), Benjamin Dimaano (ZGBA), Zaldy Du and Roger Talino (Migba) and Willy Villarica and Obet Son (LGBA). The derby stakes a cash pot of P3 million, said NFGB president Ricoy Palmares Jr.



FEDEX CUP: Lito Alvarez, president of Airfreight 2100, the sole licensee of FedEx in the Philippines; FedEx country manager Samuel David, Sylvia P. Lina; and Bert Lina, former chair of Airfreight 2100, comprise the first flight in the 2nd FedEx Golf Cup. Held at the Alabang Country Club recently, the second annual tournament of FedEx, a subsidiary of FedEx Corp. and the world's largest express transportation company, drew more than 100 players.

Bad news for golfers with errant shots

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

ONE GOLF COURSE THAT FRANKIE MIÑOZA loves to hate is Wack Wack.

And I can't blame him.

No doubt Wack Wack's layout is championship material, envied by many golf architects the world over including the legendary Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player.

You can even call Wack Wack Asia's undisputed pride the world over but to Miñoza, all superlatives don't mean a thing.

To him, Wack Wack is but one thing: Jinx.

In several Philippine Opens held at Wack Wack, Miñoza got cut. The rare times he made the cut, he finished badly.

Take the 2002 Open.

That year, Miñoza had breezed through the weekend.

That year, too, his 70-72 in the first two rounds made him proud.

"Finally, the jinx has been snapped," said Miñoza in Filipino.

Those rounds likewise put him within 5 shots off two-day leader Rick Gibson, the well-loved Canadian based in Manila and married to a Filipina.

But then, Miñoza spoke too soon.

The next day, things turned from brilliant to bizarre.

Miñoza skied to an 81 in the third round, his putting deserting him.

Staring at a 13-stroke deficit behind eventual champion Gibson, Miñoza all but kissed his title hopes goodbye.

Because Miñoza skipped both the 2004 DHL Open (there was no Open in 2003) at Riviera and last year's Open at Mt. Malarayat, I'm not surprised why he didn't sign up for this year's Open again, preferring to play in Japan.

Well, of course, not that Japan offers prizes way above those in our Open that Miñoza would rather play in the Land of the Rising Sun than in his country of birth.

More than the lucrative purse in Japan, Miñoza will bypass the Open this year because of that built-in block in his mind: the jinx at Wack Wack.

Add the fact that he has already won the Open anyway (in 1998 at Riviera), a feat that fortified his stature as one of golf's greats in this country alongside Larry Montes, Tino Tugot, Golem Silverio and Ben Arda.

To Miñoza, there's nothing to prove anymore. His place in history is safe, especially so that when he topped the Order of Merit in Asia in 1990, he earned an invitation to the 1991 Masters in Augusta, Georgia.

So, let him be.

Let it be.

* * *

Sherwood Hills, Jack Nicklaus' favorite golf course in Asia, will host its fabled Invitationals May 26-27, with 150 participants in attendance.

The shotgun start tees off at 8:30 a.m. after the ceremonial shots by Sherwood Hills Bob Sobrepeña and Trece Martires Mayor Jun Sagun.

First day competition is best-ball and second day aggregate play.

To be contested are overall low net, low gross and Divisions I and II according to average handicaps. Each participant receives a Rudy Project eyewear as a giveaway in the two-day event sponsored by Golforce, Club Leisure Management and MRT. Other backers are Mabuhay Golf, Camp John Hay Development, Federal Management, Kork Inc., Manila Southwoods Manor, Warbird Security Agency, Sports Specialist, Corporate Air and Information Professionals Inc.

* * *

Bad news for golfers who habitually hit errant shots.

In a recent decision, the Hawaii Supreme Court ruled that a golfer may not be held liable for mistakenly hitting another golfer with an errant golf ball.

In a unanimous decision, the court upheld a lower court ruling to dismiss Ryan Yoneda's lawsuit against Andrew Tom, whose wayward ball hit Yoneda in the left eye at Mililani Golf Course in 1999.

The ruling said: "It is common knowledge that not every shot played by a golfer goes exactly where he intends it to go. There wouldn't be much sport in the sport of golf if golf balls went exactly where the player wanted."

But the decision said a golfer who intentionally hits a ball to inflict injury, or recklessly hits the ball knowing that injury is highly likely, would not be exempt from liability.

On shouting "fore" or other warnings to protect other players, the court said that doing so was golf etiquette, not a requirement recognized by law.

"With the ruling that warning is like an option, that's not too good," said Yoneda, who suffered permanent vision damage. "I know what it's like to be hit and I don't want anybody to go through what I went through."

Chief Justice Ronald Moon wrote Yoneda assumed the risk of the injury when he played golf.

* * *

Comments to menju@pldtdsl.net

It's bust or s'finals for Harbour, Goose today

GAME TODAY (*Olivarez Sports Center*)
3 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Granny Goose

TAGGED AS UNDERACHIEVERS EARLY IN the conference, Harbour Centre will try to sustain its timely turnaround in the PBL Unity Cup today.

The Portmasters will try to make it two in a row against Granny Goose at 3 p.m. today in their quarterfinal duel for a semifinal seat at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque.

Payback is certainly in the minds of Harbour Centre which lost its twice-to-beat advantage to the same Granny Goose in their quarterfinal clash here last year.

Granny Goose was favored to easily secure its fourth straight semifinal seat but a driven Harbour Centre crew showed up last Tuesday and scored a 59-51 triumph to extend the series to the limit.

The winner of the knockout match will face second-seeded Montaña in a best-of-five semifinal series starting Saturday.

Rain or Shine earlier arranged a semifinal showdown against league-leader Toyota Otis after disposing off Magnolia Ice Cream, 65-60, in their own quarterfinal match.

"I'm very sure they will make adjustments but we'll be ready for them," said Harbour Centre coach Jorge Gallent.

League stars Joseph Yeo and LA Tenorio confidently took control of the Portmasters' offensive charge last Tuesday.

"If Joseph and LA could make their shots from the outside, we have a very good chance," said Gallent.

While everything clicked for the Portmasters in the second half, the Tortillos completely lost their touch.

No one was more visibly upset than coach Robert Sison, who berated his players in the team's final huddle.

"I've never lost a twice-to-beat advantage," he said.

Jasmine W. Payo

Petron all-women's taekwondo Sunday

THE COUNTRY'S FEMALE JINS, LED BY MEMbers of the national pool, take the spotlight on Sunday with the staging of the Petron all-women's taekwondo championships at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Philippine Taekwondo Association president Robert N. Aventajado said 500 or so athletes from chapters and branches in Metro Manila and the provinces including the military services are expected to vie for honors.

Competition will be held in senior, junior and mid-junior women and gradeschool girls.

Organizing committee chair Sung Chon Hong says the event is part of the PTA's commitment to the development of sports.

The tourney is supported by Petron, Philippine Sports Commission, Accel and Milo.

ZHANG Ziqian (13) of China's Tianjin Bridgestone club rises to block Sangsom Thailand's Wilavan Apiyapong in yesterday's game. ERIK ARAZAS

China, Taiwan clobber foes in Asian volley

CHINA, THE DEFENDING CHAMPION, AND last year's second placer Chinese-Taipei started their campaigns on a high note yesterday by winning their matches at the start of the 2006 Asian Women's Club volleyball championship at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Bannered by Tianjin Bridgestone, the Chinese shook off sluggish start to down Sangsom Thailand, 23-25, 25-19, 25-22, 26-24, while the Taiwanese, represented by Chung Shan, scored a 25-16, 18-25, 25-21, 25-14 win over Kazakhstan.

The 24-year-old hard-hitting Li Wang pumped in 15 kills, including two straight hits that shattered a 24-all deadlock in the fourth set to clinch China's first win in the weeklong international event.

"We didn't expect Thailand to play strongly," said Chinese coach Wang Baoquan through an interpreter. "We fumbled, but I'm happy we maintained our toughness."

The Taiwanese, on the other hand, overcame their taller rivals from Rahat Kazakhstan with their quickness.

Pretty Lin Ching-i led Chung Shan's attack with 17 crisp kills, three blocks and one service winner while skipper Kou Nai-han fired 19 kills and had one block. Chen Shuli added 13 kills.

Hisamitsu Seiyaku Springs of Japan gets going against Kazakhstan in today's third game at 6 p.m. Accel Philippines battles Chinese-Taipei earlier at 2 p.m. while Garuda Indonesia plays Tianjin Bridgestone China at 4.

The tourney is organized by the Philippine Volleyball Federation (PVF) and sponsored by Hitachi, Shakey's, Hope, PCSO and Accel.

GAMES TODAY
(*Rizal Coliseum*)
2 p.m.— Chun Shan (Chinese Taipei) vs Accel (Philippines)
Bridgestone (China)
6 p.m.—Hisamitsu Seiyaku Springs (Japan) vs Rahat (Kazakhstan)

Express pick up third victory over Beermen

By June Navarro

BROTHERS YANCY AND RANIDEL DE OCAMPO combined in a lethal sibling act that gave Air21 a fighting chance in the quarterfinals.

The 6-foot-9 Yancy banged in 10 points and the hot-shooting Ranidel had eight in a pivotal fourth-quarter assault that lifted the Express to a 110-98 rout of San Miguel Beer last night in the Gran Matador-PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Niño Cañaleta also played a stellar role, erasing his previous career-high of 27 points by pumping in 31 to become the first rookie to lead his team in scoring since Danny Seigle and Asi Taulava in the 1999 All-Filipino,

The Express finished the classification phase with seven victories and nine setbacks.

"We just have to wait but we're already proud of what we have achieved," said Air21 coach Bo Perasol.

The Express shipped sniper Renren Ritualo and Patrick Fran to the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals prior to their three-game win streak.

Perasol and the Express now hope that Coca-Cola (7-8) and Barangay Ginebra (7-8) don't get win No. 8 to evade the ignominy of being relegated to seventh down to the tailend of the standings.

Purefoods grabbed the top spot in the semifinals with a 12-4 record. The Beermen finished at 11-5.

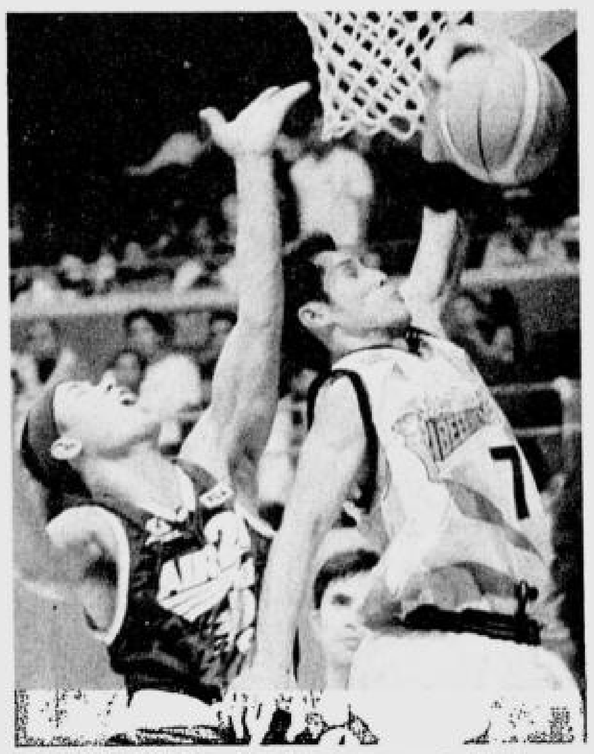
Seigle fired 22 points and became the first player since Nelson Asaytono in the 1997 All-Filipino Cup to average at least 20 points for 12 straight games.

The scores:

AIR21 110—Cañaleta 31, De Ocampo Y. 19, Arboleda 18, De Ocampo R. 17, Telan 12, Avenido 8, Se 3, Padilla 2, Dacia 0.

SAN MIGUEL 98—Seigle 22, Racela 21, Hontiveros 16, Peña15, Cablay 10, Ildefonso 9, Calaguio 3, Gonzales 2, Lopez 0, Noble 0.

Quarters: 18-22, 44-46, 81-83, 110-98



SAN MIGUEL'S Dondon Hontiveros controls the rebound over Air21's Leo Avenido. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

RP chessers bow to US a sixth time

From page A21

positional advantage over Nakamura, but opted for a draw as he was down on time, one hour against 10 minutes.

"It was a good fight," said men's team captain Sammy Estimo. "Torre taught Onischuk an endgame lesson."

In Round 4 against Colombia, which the Philippines beat, 2.5-1.5, in the 2004 Calvia Olympiad, Estimo will again field his three GMs and 12-year-old Fide Master Wesley So on board 4.

Paragua will handle black against Jaime Alexander Cuartas while Torre will play white against Alder Escobar. Antonio, who provided the clinching point in Calvia, will be pitted against FM Sergio Barrientos, while So will tackle FM Rafael Mendoza.

Powerhouse Russia moved into contention with a 2.5-1.5 victory over Germany, gaining a share of the lead in the men's side with China and Uzbekistan at 10.5 points. The Russians and the Chinese, who downed the Slovaks, 3.5-05, clash on the top board in round 4 Wednesday while the Uzbeks battle the Ukrainians (10 points) in the other stellar tussle.

Lithuania paced the women's division with a perfect 9 points but is expected to encounter rough sailing against Russia (8.5) Wednesday. Reigning titlist China (8.5 points) tangles with Ukraine (8 points) in the other featured match.

Ochoa, Tinio lead Samsung Jungolf titlists

CARLOS MIGUEL OCHOA CLOSED out with a 4-under-par 68 to win the boys' Class A title with a 142 total and by five strokes over Kim Joon-ho in the seventh and penultimate leg of the Samsung Jungolf Tour at the Couples course of the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite.

Sharing the spotlight with Ochoa was Carlos Tinio, scoring 77-156, who beat national age-group titlist James Chun by three for the Class B crown of the 36-hole event sponsored chiefly by Samsung, Philippine Airlines, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Offfice and Pagcor.

The final leg of the Tour also supported by Callaway, Titleist, Mizuno, La Jolla, Taylor Made, Wilson, Ping, Auto Magic, Unilever, MCCI Air Liquid, INQUIRER Golf and Michael Guy will be held next week at the Orchard Golf and Country Club.

Champions in the girls' division were Ha Ram Kim in Class A, Woo Young Kyung in Class B, Andie Unson in Class C, Daniela Uy in Class D and Claire Legaspi in Class E.

Kim (142) beat Beverly Mendoza (164), Woo (149) finished far ahead of de Guzman (158), Unson (150) edged Song Yi Choi (153), Uy (186) beat Kim Rin (209) and Legaspi (132) tripped Abby Arevalo (143).

The other boys' winners were RJ Tallud (Class C), AR Ramos (Class D), Rupert Zaragosa (Class E) and Ryan Monsalve (Class F).

Tallud (167) turned back James Ricohermoso by three shots, Ramos (152) wound up 11 shots ahead of Mark Anthony Arevalo while Zaragosa (129) was 10 ahead of Ivan Monsalve.

Meanwhile, Chris dela Cruz scored a hole-in-one on the 14th hole on Tuesday.

Louie Espinosa and a science he once called sweet

By Percy D. Della

COMMENTARY

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA—HOW'S THE new job? I asked with the subtlety of a sledgehammer.

The voice on the other end of the line paused for breath.

To keep the edge off my query, I segued into something mundane.

But Luisito Espinosa was his usual cool dude. "Everything's fine and dandy, sir," he responded in Filipino.

From a two-time world boxing champion to a stocker for giant retail chain Costco.

If that's not a radical job switch, what is? A sea change is more like it.

Yet, leave it to a real champion like Luisito to give everything a positive spin.

"I work alongside buddies. I am finally experiencing what working life in America is about," said Louie, pride brimming in his voice.

Louie now favors work gloves for the usual boxing gloves. He has traded the groin cup for a back brace.

He still wakes up in the wee hours—not to jog but to drive or catch the bus for the short workday commute from San Francisco to Daly City.

As a new employee at Costco, he works the unholy 4 a.m. shift. He helps keep the store filled to the ceiling before the doors swing open for wholesalers and then the retail shoppers.

He has not said so publicly, but Luisito appears to have let go of his hold on a science he once called sweet.

At 39 and pushing 40, he has come to grips with age.

The trigger for his change of heart seems to be the sympathetic action—I call it a gesture—by the California Athletic Commission.

The commission is unwilling to license Louie again, lest he suffers more heart-rending losses to upstarts out to carve a name at the expense of a future Hall of Famer.

Luisito was a constant source of pride for Filipinos when he ruled both the bantamweight and featherweight boxing classes—one of only seven fighters to don dual world crowns.

He once said that he'll hang it up once the hard-earned $150,000 purse from a championship fight in South Cotabato nine or 10 years ago—and still owed him by absconding promoters—"is stashed in my children's bank."

Hermie Rivera, Louie's former manager had filed a civil suit to collect the purse. But the case had been in legal limbo for years.

The judge assigned to hear the case has outrageously taken the longest time deliberating whether to inhibit or to rule.

Louie has written President Macapagal-Arroyo about his plight. He even sought current boxing hero Manny Pacquiao's help.

His pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

Fortunately, Uncle Sam had finally granted Louie a green card after years of waiting. At long last, he can find work outside his special skills of beak busting.

The Costco job is a start.

"I am serious about my job because I need to save for my family," he stressed.

With wife Marie Cherie now living on her own in Las Vegas, Louie keeps family ties with his young children Janica, Niko and John Louie. The kids are in the care of his mother-in-law in Manila.

"It is important that my kids know that I still love them and that my hard work is for their well-being."

PSC back in Palaro organizing committee

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION is back in the organizing committee of the Palarong Pambansa as an offshoot of the age-cheating controversy that rocked the recent Palaro in Naga City.

"There is a need to strengthen the screening system of the Palaro, starting even from the district level," said PSC chair Butch Ramirez, who met with officials of the Department of Education recently.

"It's going to be a collaboration to help the DepEd successfully stage the annual meet for elementary and high school athletes."

At least two incidents of cheating were reported during the Palaro following a protest by the National Capital Region elementary baseball team against two alleged overaged players from Calabarzon.

"There are so many aspects we need to improve on, hopefully we could work it out because we are sending the athletes and coaches (from Palaro) to the Philippine Sports Institute," said PSC deputy executive director Cesar Pradas.

The DepEd has retained more seats in the organizing committee with six, while the Philippine Olympic Committee and the PSC were given two each starting in the next Palaro.

The PSC used to stage the annual Games in the 1990s but it was returned to the DepEd last year.

Cycling criterium races resume in San Fernando

THE CHASE FOR CYCLING HONORS resumes this weekend with the staging of the fifth leg of the Philamlife Cycling Search Invitational (CSI) Criterium Race, dubbed the first Mayor Oscar Rodriguez Cup, in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

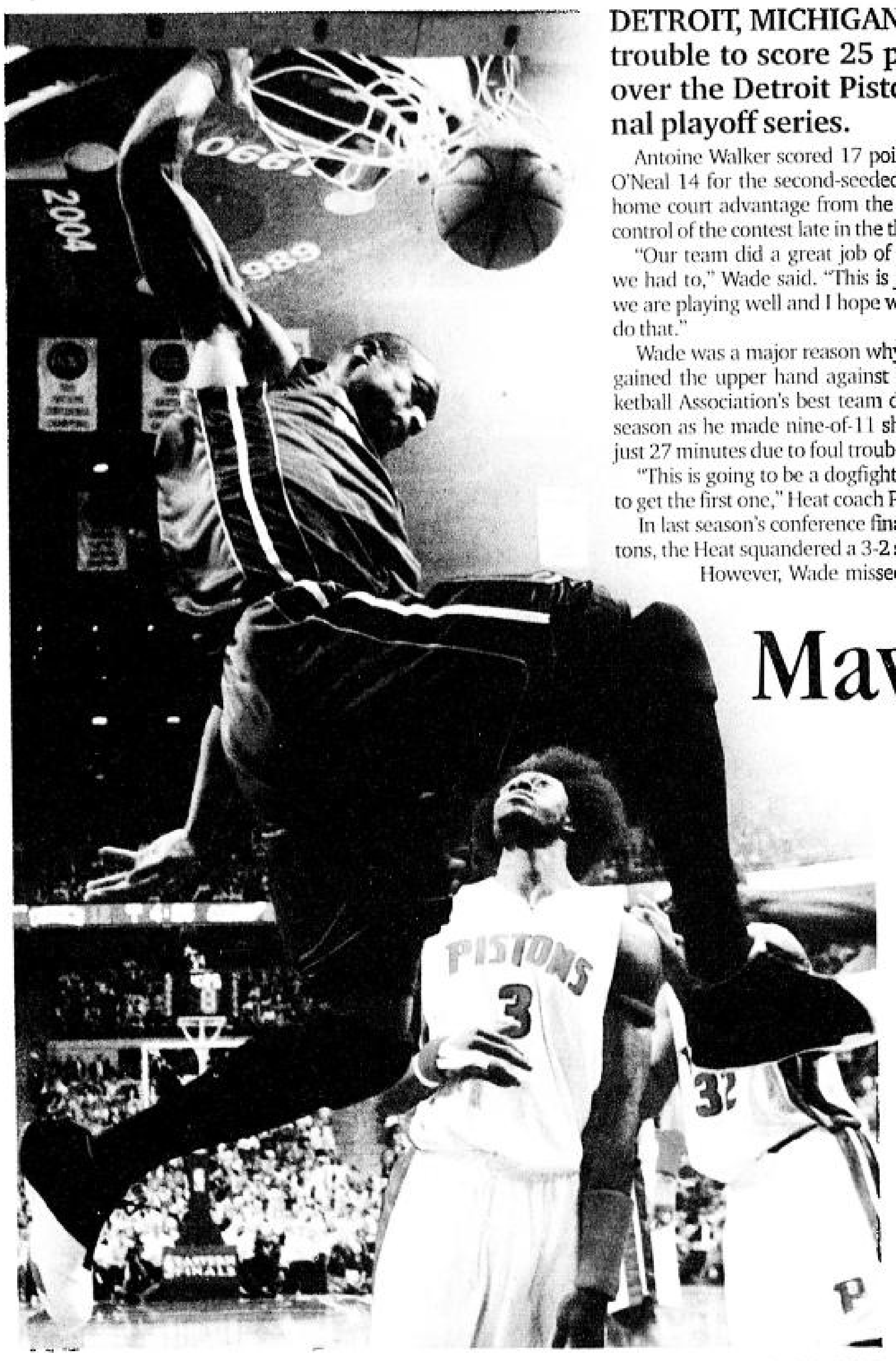
Former Asian tour king Victor Espiritu is the man to catch as the winner of the third leg in Angeles City currently shows the way in the Open elite category with 92 points.

The Philippine Army mainstay is expected to pour it all out in the 21-lap event of the series presented by Philpost this Saturday at the San Fernando city proper.

Bernard Luzon, spearhead of San Leonardo cycling team, is in second with 79 points while Lloyd Reynante of GHQ-UCAP has 66 points for third. Agnes Bikeshop's Albert Primero, who ruled the kickoff leg in Tarlac, is in fourth with 44 followed by Sherwin Carrera, also of Agnes Bikeshop with 38.

Three other categories—youth, executive and masters—are on tap in the event, one of this highlights of the Piestang Fernandino celebrations. Registration is ongoing, according to the organizing Treo Sales and Management Corp. For details, call 241-0415 or 241-0418.

Miami makes Detroit feel the Heat



MIAMI Heat guard Dwyane Wade (front) dunks during the first quarter of Game 1 of the NBA Eastern Conference Finals against the Detroit Pistons in Auburn Hills, Michigan. AP

DETROIT, MICHIGAN—DWAYNE WADE PLAYED THROUGH FOUL trouble to score 25 points as the Miami Heat posted a 91-86 win over the Detroit Pistons on Tuesday in the opener of their semifinal playoff series.

Antoine Walker scored 17 points and Shaquille O'Neal 14 for the second-seeded Heat, who stole home court advantage from the Pistons by taking control of the contest late in the third quarter.

"Our team did a great job of making the plays we had to," Wade said. "This is just a great team, we are playing well and I hope we can continue to do that."

Wade was a major reason why the Heat quickly gained the upper hand against the National Basketball Association's best team during the regular season as he made nine-of-11 shots while playing just 27 minutes due to foul trouble.

"This is going to be a dogfight, and we're happy to get the first one," Heat coach Pat Riley said.

In last season's conference finals against the Pistons, the Heat squandered a 3-2 series lead.

However, Wade missed game six with a rib injury and O'Neal played the series with a thigh injury.

But with week of rest after disposing of New Jersey in five games in the conference semifinals, the Heat came out sharp, scoring the game's first 11 points and never trailing in the first half.

Things looked like they were unraveling when Wade went to the bench with his fourth foul at the 7:14 mark of the third quarter with the game tied at 54-54.

Chauncey Billups converted a driving a layup, Tayshaun Prince made two free throws and Rasheed Wallace drained a jumper to give the Pistons their biggest lead, 60-55, with 4:18 left in the third.

However, the Heat tightened their defense and used an 11-1 surge to close the quarter with Wade on the bench to take the lead for good. Detroit missed its final nine shots of the period.

Veteran Gary Payton, who scored 14 points, drilled a jumper and Walker and James Posey each hit three-pointers in the Heat's burst to close the period.

Another of the Heat's many veterans, Alonzo Mourning had two baskets and a key block that provided a 75-65 advantage with 6:31 remaining.

"Alonzo was a big force down low when Shaq (O'Neal) went out," Wade said.

"We just gotta come out and play hard, gotta come out and execute and do what we do and not get caught up in playing their style of game, whether it's Game Two, Three, Four, whatever," said Pistons center Ben Wallace, who grabbed 14 rebounds.

"If we come out and play the way they want to play, then we don't have a chance."

Hamilton scored 22 points, Billups 19 and Prince 16 for the Pistons, who struggled most of the way offensively as they shot just 38 percent (31-of-82). Detroit hosts game two on Thursday. *AFP*

- **NBA on TV**
- **SOLAR SPORTS**—Phoenix vs Dallas, 8:30 a.m., replay at 8 p.m.
- **RPN-9**—Phoenix vs Dallas, 9 a.m.

Mavericks meet a familiar foe

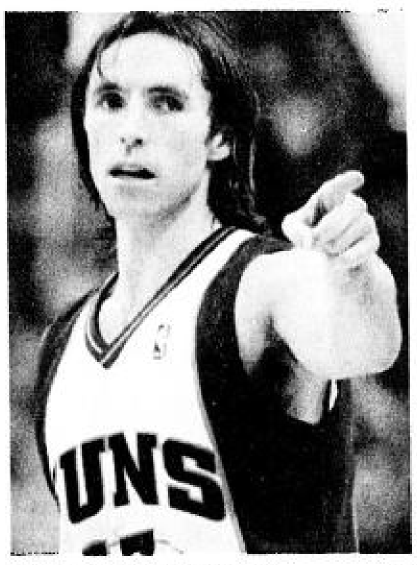
AUSTIN, TEXAS—NOT HIM AGAIN?

For the second year in a row, the Dallas Mavericks come face-to-face with their former point guard, Steve Nash, in an NBA Western Conference playoff series.

Nash, the league's MVP the past two seasons, will lead the Phoenix Suns into Dallas tonight for Game 1 of the conference finals.

The Mavs and Suns met last year in the semifinals, Phoenix winning 4-2 while securing the series in Dallas with a 130-126 victory in overtime. Nash produced 39 points, 12 assists and nine rebounds in the game.

This time Nash is without one important sidekick, the menacing Amare Stoudemire, a 6-foot-10-inch forward-center who was lost to a knee injury for all but three games of the season. But Shawn Marion—38 points and 16 rebounds in that final game against Dallas—is still with Nash.



NASH: Yes, it's him again. AP

And the Suns continue to play differently than the rest, fastbreaking and shooting three-pointers on their way to a league-high 108.4 points a game. With an offense that is perimeter-based, they present a vivid contrast to the Mavs' last opponent, San Antonio, whose best asset is Tim Duncan inside.

"Now you've got to reprogram yourself," Dallas' Dirk Nowitzki said. "After (the Mavs score), you can't relax, you've got to run back as fast as you can because Steve is always throwing those long passes along the sideline, pushing it."

Nash was famously allowed to leave Dallas as a free agent after the 2003-04 season, when the Suns gave him a contract more to his liking than the one Mavs owner Mark Cuban offered.

The Suns have three new players this season who are starters. Raja Bell is a harassing perimeter defender who has become an adept three-point shooter. The versatile 6-8 Boris Diaw can play all five positions for the Suns.

Tim Thomas, a 6-10 forward, is the tallest starter but has attempted more shots outside the three-point line (79) than inside (77) during the playoffs.

"Last year we obviously had some super talent with Amare and Joe Johnson and Quentin (Richardson)," Nash said. "This year, I think we're smarter, more experienced."

New York Times News Service

Hingis seeks redemption in French Open

LONDON—PERHAPS MORE THAN ANY OTHER tournament, the French Open offers former world No. 1 Martina Hingis the chance to make up for past shortcomings.

The 25-year-old Swiss, back after a three-year break from the game, never won the claycourt grand slam during her period of dominance in women's tennis at the end of the 1990s.

Her experiences of Roland Garros have always been tinged with disappointment, and on one notable occasion, tears and a temper tantrum.

The latter occurred in 1999 when she stormed off in a huff after losing to Steffi Graf, 4-6, 7-5, 6-2, in the final.

Hingis broke tennis etiquette by crossing the net to argue a line call, served underarm on match point and had to be coaxed back on to the court by her mother for the trophy presentation.

Despite not having won the singles title, however, Hingis' record at Roland Garros is no cause for shame.

In her last five French Open appearances she reached the semifinals thrice and the final twice.

She would dearly love to fill that remaining gap in her trophy cabinet, although Roland Garros, which starts on Sunday, may have come just a little too soon for her.

However, last weekend's victory at the Italian Open, Hingis' first title since she returned to the tour, showed that she might yet pull it off.

Hingis has now won 31 matches this year, second only on the tour to Russian Nadia Petrova with 33. *Reuters*

Now, the Clippers can start dreaming

LOS ANGELES—AN NBA CHAMPIONSHIP?

It's on the way for the Clippers.

OK, well, general manager Elgin Baylor and coach Mike Dunleavy were not quite that specific when they discussed the team's future at Staples Center on Tuesday. But the duo did see the need to place higher goals for their squad, considering the team's 47-35 regular-season finish and falling one victory shy of the Western Conference finals.

Coming into this season, Dunleavy placed a goal of making the playoffs on his squad, but only if his team stayed healthy. For next season, the Clippers want to improve, and that could mean a better record and more playoff wins.

"I never want to limit us," Dunleavy said. "We've already made the playoffs. The next goal is the championship, as far as I'm concerned, and to be realistic with it. "

Although contending for a championship never was a legitimate possibility for the team's 26-year history in California, this Clipper squad finished with the second best record in franchise history and won its first playoff series in 30 years. The coach was far from intimidated by the elite teams in the NBA.

"We played the Suns," he said. "We thought we could beat them. We weren't that far off. The next round, Dallas or San Antonio, we didn't think they were unstoppable. Quite frankly, the only team that worried us was Miami because of Shaq (O'Neal). I don't think (Chris) Kaman would have gotten calls against Shaq."

Where the Clippers' players go from here is, hopefully, nowhere, according to Baylor and Dunleavy. They have Elton Brand, Corey Maggette and Cuttino Mobley signed to long-term contracts.

The next orders of business concern free agents Sam Cassell and Vladimir Radmanovic, Kaman and Dunleavy himself. Retaining these four should not be that difficult, unless the 36-year-old Cassell and Radmanovic demand much more than what Clippers management expects.

Cassell is coming off a contract in which he was paid approximately $6 million this season. He has stated that he wants to stay with the Clippers for two more seasons and then become a coach.

For the first time in perhaps their history, the Clippers hardly have a need to fill any holes on their roster. The plan is simply to keep this squad together and have their players improve.

New York Times News Service

Lance's new target: NY marathon

NEW YORK—LANCE ARMSTRONG has a simple goal for his first New York City Marathon: finish within an hour of the winner.

"They'll already be off having lunch" when he finishes, the seven-time Tour de France winner said with a smile Tuesday.

Armstrong said he's competing in the marathon just for the fun of it.

"I would consider doing anything," he said. "I would do an adventure race; I would do a kayak race; I would surf; I would do a triathlon, but nothing with any set goals or any pressure."

Armstrong, who said he runs about 8-16 kilometers (5-10 miles) a day, retired from cycling after winning an unprecedented seventh straight Tour de France last year.

Armstrong was appearing to promote a joint venture between Nike and Apple. The companies have developed a wireless system so that Nike shoes can be embedded with a sensor to communicate with an Apple iPod Nano to help track a runner's progress and choreograph songs. *AP*

Raptors tab No. 1 pick via lottery

NEW YORK—BRYAN COLANGELO, WHO ASSUMED the task of rebuilding the Toronto Raptors two months ago, will have the top overall pick in the National Basketball Association entry draft.

The Raptors (27-55) won the 2006 draft lottery on Tuesday. They had just an 8.8 percent chance of receiving the top pick and should have picked fifth had form held.

However, form rarely holds in the lottery, which has seen the team with the worst record receive the top pick just twice in the last 16 years.

The Chicago Bulls, who own the first-round pick of the New York Knicks (23-59), remained second. The Charlotte Bobcats (26-56) remained third.

The lottery's loser was the Portland Trail Blazers (21-61), who had the NBA's worst record and a 25 percent chance of receiving the top pick but dropped to fourth—the lowest possible pick they could have received.

"I'd rather be picking No. 1," Trail Blazers president Steve Patterson said.

"For us to have this kind of luck, it's a sign of a reversal of fortune," Colangelo said.

Colangelo will be taking good, long looks at Tyrus Thomas of LSU and LaMarcus Aldridge of Texas, a pair of hyperathletic college forwards leaving school early who figure to be the first two selections. *AFP*

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Ronaldinho eyes golden double

RIO DE JANEIRO—RONALDINHO could complete a rare double by winning the World Cup little more than 50 days after inspiring Barcelona to victory in the European Champions League.

While a total of 49 players have graced the finals of international and European club football's greatest tournaments in the same season, only a fraction of that figure, eight, have managed to win both in the same year.

Ronaldinho's Brazil teammate Roberto Carlos managed it in 2002, and another Real Madrid player, France's Christian Karembeu achieved it four years earlier.

But beyond that, you have to travel back 32 years, when six members of the Bayern Munich side led by Franz Beckenbauer lifted the 1974 European Cup before helping West Germany win the World Cup on home soil.

BRAZILIAN star Ronaldinho (right) signs autographs for Swiss Paraplegic Research Center patients in Switzerland, where Brazil will train before the World Cup. AFP

"To win the Champions League with Barcelona and the World Cup with Brazil would be something special," said Ronaldinho.

Meanwhile, South Korea was held to a 1-1 draw by Senegal on Tuesday, in the first of its four warm-up matches before next month's FIFA World Cup finals. *AFP*

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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New Kapamilya 'Deals'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE KAPAMILYA network is unveiling several new shows in the coming weeks—both on its flagship free TV channel ABS-CBN 2 and its UHF affiliate Studio 23.

ABS-CBN launches "Kapamilya, Deal or No Deal," a primetime game-show hosted by Kris Aquino on June 5.

Aquino's noontime game show "Game KNB?" isn't folding up, however, because "Deal or No Deal" only has a limited two-month run as a filler to replace "Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition," said a network insider.

ABS-CBN is also said to have acquired the franchise for "Deal or No Deal" from Endemol, the same Dutch production company behind the "Big Brother" series.

According to the Internet, there are at least 40 versions of "Deal or No Deal" all over the world—including Mexican, Pan-Arabic (Middle Eastern), Polish, Indian, French, Bulgarian, Tunisian and the popular UK and US editions.

The format basically involves a contestant choosing from a number of briefcases (usually 26) that contain different sums of money.

The briefcase that the contestant has chosen can be "purchased" by the show's "Banker"—with the "offer" based on potential value.

Sounds like "Kuwarta o Kahon" or "Laban o Bawi" on "Eat Bulaga."

"Kapamilya, Deal or No Deal" will occupy the time slot to be vacated by "PBB Teen Edition" next month, as the network lays the ground work for PBB's new three-month edition.

IYA Villania hosts new celebrity dance show.

Also, ABS-CBN is launching a new celebrity dance competition show, "You Can Dance."

According to the insider, the new party show, which serves as the Kapamilya's hipper and more youthful answer to ABC 5's "Shall We Dance," is to be hosted by VJ Iya Villania.

A year ago, ABS-CBN launched a talent contest with a similar format, "Star Dance," with Vanessa del Bianco, Marvin Agustin, Archie Alemania, JC Cuadrado and Bianca Gonzalez as hosts.

Speaking of "PBB" host Gonzalez, she was also tapped to anchor a new entertainment show on Studio 23, "Blog" or "Barkada Log."

According to Leo Katigbak, managing director of Studio 23, "Blog" is the localized version of an E! channel show biz program. "It will feature Hollywood and local gossip."

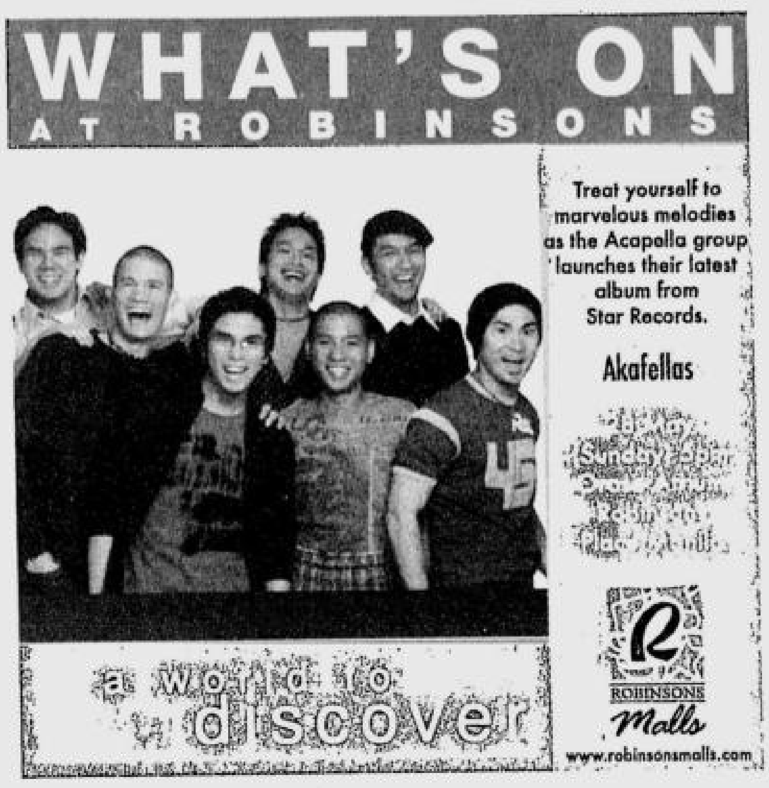
Also in the Studio 23 lineup are the men's lifestyle program "It's a Guy Thing" and the comedy show "Gag Ito."

"Guy Thing" is hosted by Bernard Palanca, Borgy Manotoc, John Joe Joseph, Ketchup Eusebio and Bubbles Paraiso, while "Gag Ito" is topbilled by Epy Quizon.

"Our goal is to offer variety, different flavors, to our viewers," Katigbak said.

He asserted that Studio 23 was not affected by the launch of QTV, GMA 7's new affiliate.

"QTV is geared for women and the *masa*, while Studio 23 targets the youth market. A QTV show like 'Moms' may post higher ratings than a Studio 23 canned show like 'Desperate Housewives,' but what we offer is unduplicated reach because our viewers have purchasing power," he concluded.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PENELOPE Cruz in "Volver."

Europe outshines H'wood in Cannes

Penelope, Almodovar and other Europeans make waves in world's biggest film fest

CANNES—SPANISH FILMMAKER PEDRO Almodovar leads the early running in Cannes this year with his bittersweet comedy "Volver," as European cinema overshadows Hollywood at the world's biggest film festival.

Also catching critics' eye is Britain's Andrea Arnold with "Red Road" and Turkey's Nuri Bilge Ceylan with "Iklimler (Climates)."

"America is really performing badly this year," said Mark Cousins, an author and commentator on cinema. "Asia is doing next to nothing in the competition, so it is really Europe that is shining with an old-fashioned approach to cinema."

While critics and the Cannes jury do not always see eye to eye, leading the pack in the race for the coveted Palme d'Or is Almodovar's "Volver," a touching and humorous return to his beloved world of women.

Spanish star Penelope Cruz teams up with another of the director's muses Carmen Maura in what has been described as the 32-year-old beauty's best performance yet, making her an early favorite in the the Best Actress derby.

Her stiffest competition to date comes from the lesser known Kate Dickie, who plays a grief-stricken woman bent on revenge in "Red Road."

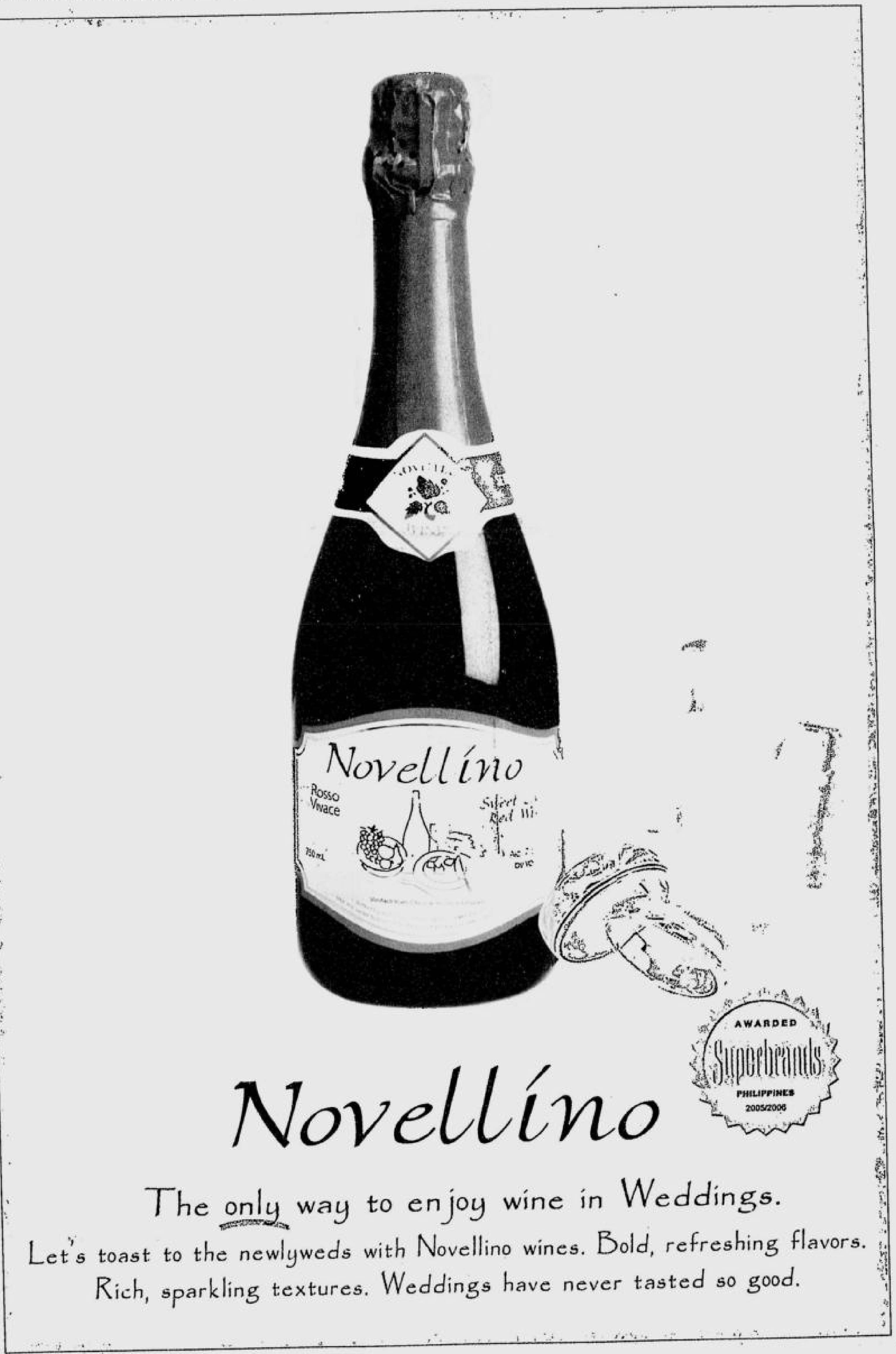
Screen International critic Allan Hunter said the film, the first of a trilogy, was "likely to emerge as one of this year's discoveries."

Also highlighted as a possible prize winner among the first 10 of 20 films in competition is Britain's Ken Loach with his Irish drama "The Wind That Shakes the Barley."

Among the disappointments was US director Richard Kelly's "Southland Tales," the follow-up to his cult hit "Donnie Darko."

At two hours and 40 minutes, audiences

EUROPE/ A2-2



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4 THE DA VINCI CODE
12.00 3:10 6:20 9:30

5 X-MEN 3
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6 THE DA VINCI CODE
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7 POSEIDON
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8 OVER THE HEDGE
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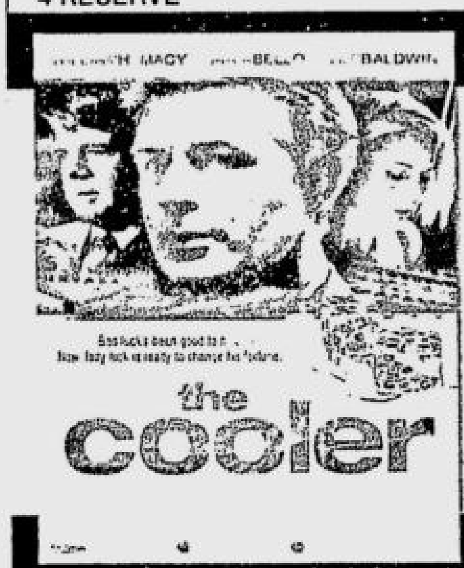

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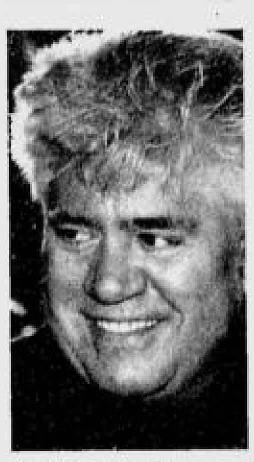


ALMODOVAR

Europe outshines H'wood…

From page A2-1

complained it was too long, and the Variety trade magazine called it "pretentious … fatally unfocused fantasy about American fascism, radical rebellion, nuclear terrorism and apocalypse."

Mixed reviews

Also from the United States, Richard Linklater's "Fast Food Nation," based on the Eric Schlosser bestseller of the same name about big restaurant chains, won only mixed reviews.

The eagerly awaited "The Da Vinci Code," which opened the festival but is out of competition, was panned by reviewers, although its worldwide box-office tally of $224 million in only a few days was proof that the public was not listening.

Also out of competition, "X-Men III: The Last Stand" is the final episode of a lucrative franchise and offers more high-octane action.

But again the reaction was cool. *Reuters*

FEEDBACK

FROM CYRIAN DURban (cyadurb@yahoo.com) Briz District, Tagum City, Davao del Norte

After watching the grand showdown of Aicelle and Gerald Santos on "Pinoy Pop Superstar," I realized that it's hard to fathom or predict the judges' final decision.

In the ultimate one-on-one, Aicelle's performance was better compared to Gerald's.

Still, Gerald got the judges' vote.

I understand that Gerald was an early favorite among the resident judges.

Aicelle, on the other hand, was the top pick in city roadshows and in the album performance, a bigger factor as far as I'm concerned.

With due respect to Gerald, he has a simple voice that spells mass appeal. But my problem is that he keeps singing the same type of Filipino songs and, as such, he tends to be boring.

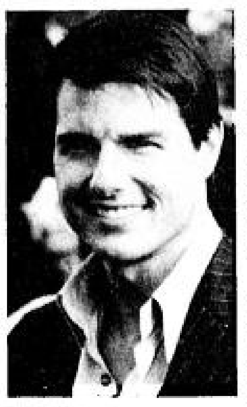
Aren't we looking for a versatile recording artist? A "Superstar?"

I was sorely disappointed with Gerald's victory. Without a doubt, the stage was owned by Aicelle Santos (voice quality and versatility-wise) that night. To Aicelle, I know that you deserve another shot. Don't give up because the music industry needs more talented people like you.

ROUNDUP

'M:i:III' cleared with Chinese censors

HONG KONG—CHINESE CENSORS HAVE cleared the Tom Cruise action thriller "Mission: Impossible III" for release in the country, a film executive said Monday.



TOM Cruise

"It's passed censorship," said Yuan Wenqiang, vice president at the state-owned China Film Group, one of the film's distributors in China.

There were concerns that some scenes set in Shanghai may be cut because they spoiled the city's image. Some showed tattered underwear hanging from laundry lines. State media reported earlier censors also wanted scenes of a car chase and a shootout shortened or cut.

Yuan also didn't know when the movie will hit movie theaters. But a spokesperson for the film's international distributor, UIP, said earlier it's unlikely the film will be shown in June even if it passes censorship because dubbing will take time. *AP*

Brangelina paparazzi freed

WALVIS BAY, Namibia—A Namibian judge dismissed charges on Monday against a South African photographer arrested for trespassing while trying to snap a shot of pregnant superstar Angelina Jolie and her partner Brad Pitt.

JOHN Liebenberg

John Liebenberg was taken into custody on Friday afternoon after driving into the back of a police barracks in search of a vantage point to take a photograph of a nearby private hospital in the port town of Walvis Bay.

The 48-year-old veteran photo journalist was reacting to a tip-off that Jolie had been rushed there to have her baby.

He was released on a warning after being detained for three days in a communal cell. *Reuters*

Bullock fights off stalker

LOS ANGELES—Sandra Bullock wants a judge to extend a 2003 stay-away order against a man she accuses of stalking her across three US states, according to court documents.

Thomas James Weldon's failure to appear to rebut Bullock's allegations resulted in Los Angeles Superior Court Commissioner Scott M. Gordon issuing a default judgment against him on June 6, 2003.

SANDRA Bullock

Weldon, 37, was ordered to stay 182 meters from the actress and to not contact her for three years. Bullock wants the keep-away order extended because it expires June 5.

Bullock, 41, has alleged Weldon followed her from Michigan to Texas and California. She said he also sent her e-mails and faxes and left voice mail messages with her and her family, all "indicating he wants to have a relationship with her."

Judge Marion Johnson was to consider the extension at a hearing on May 31. *AP*

Led Zep gets Polar Prize

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—The surviving members of legendary rock band Led Zeppelin received the prestigious Polar Music Prize from Sweden's king on Monday in the city where they recorded their final studio album 27 years ago.

Robert Plant, Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones crossed the stage of the Stockholm Concert Hall—also the venue for the annual Nobel Prizes—to accept the award they shared with Russian conductor Valery Gergiev. John Bonham, the group's drummer, who died in 1980, was represented by his daughter Zoe.

The award, which is typically split between pop artists and classical musicians, was founded in 1989 by Stig Anderson, manager of Swedish pop group ABBA, through a donation to The Royal Swedish Academy of Music. Each prize winner collects $137,000 (107,000 euros). *AP*

SWEDISH King Carl Gustaf XVI (right) award the Polar Music Prize to surviving members of rock band Led Zeppelin, from left, Zoe Bonham (daughter of deceased drummer John Bonham), John Paul Jones and Robert Plant. AP

Barton bids 'The OC' goodbye

NEW YORK—Actress Mischa Barton says it was better to be killed in a car wreck on "The OC" than to leave the Fox teen drama in "one of those lame farewells."

MISCHA Barton

Barton's character, Marissa Cooper, died in the arms of ex-boyfriend Ryan Atwood (Benjamin McKenzie) after Ryan lost control of his SUV and crashed. The third season's closer aired last week.

"Well, I was really excited that I get to die, to be honest," the 20-year-old actress told Newsweek magazine in an interview.

Marissa had been central to "The OC" since the show's debut in 2003. The Newport Beach teen had battled depression and drug and alcohol abuse, had a brief lesbian relationship and was expelled from her posh high school for shooting a man. *AP*

'X-Men' in Cannes

CANNES—The successful X-Men franchise came to a close at the Cannes Film Festival on Monday with "X-Men III: The Last Stand," bringing together the mutant superheroes for one last action adventure.

The ending could allow for a fourth installment and director Brett Ratner was asked whether the Marvel comic adaptation could spawn a "Next Generation" series.

"I must say that in my opinion ... there will not be an X-4. This will be the last stand," he said.

But he added: "That doesn't mean there won't be a spin-off, a Wolverine movie, a Magneto movie, a Professor X movie. There's a lot of opportunities." *Reuters*

HUGH Jackman and Halle Berry in "X-Men III: The Last Stand"

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May 27, 2006 | ERIK MANA | 8:00PM
EVERY FRI & SAT OF JUNE | NINA in VERY MANILOW | 9:00PM
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MAY 26 & 27 2006 | WERE STILL HOT "THE MUSICAL" | 8:00PM
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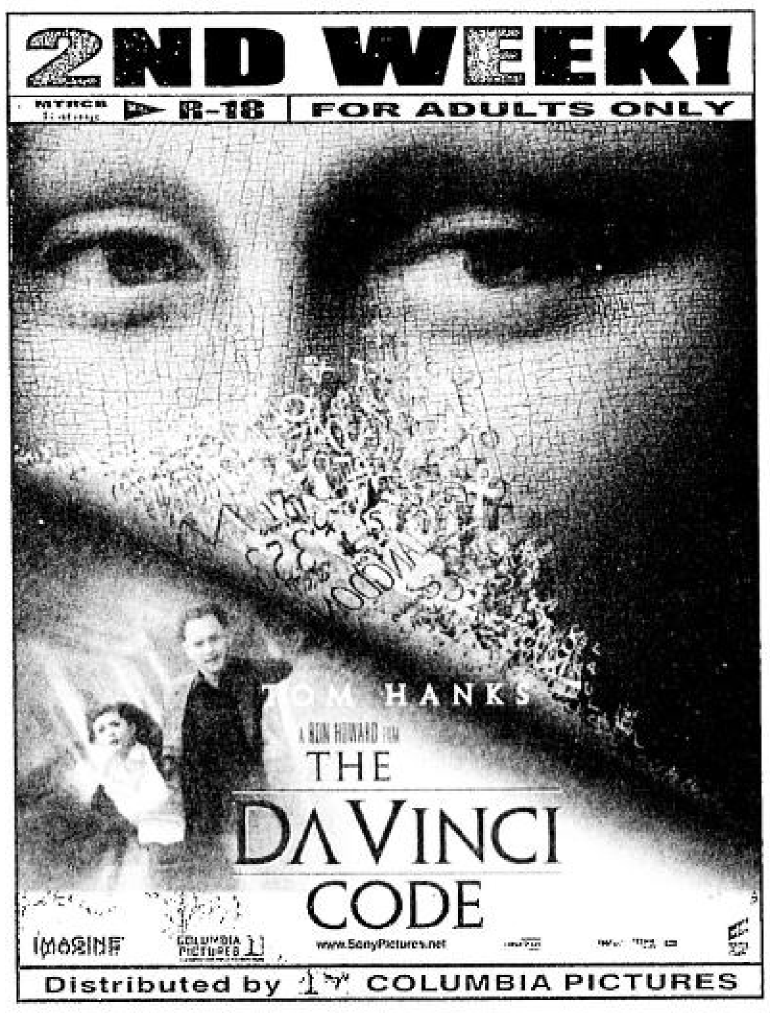

2ND WEEK!
MTRCB Rating R-18 FOR ADULTS ONLY
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Telephone: 633.2227 / 8337851 loc. 171
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2 (DOLBY) X-MEN 3 PG13
3 (DOLBY) DA VINCI CODE R18
4 (DOLBY) DA VINCI CODE R18
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) OVER THE HEDGE GP

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) X - MEN - 3
2 (SDDS) X - MEN - 3
3 (DTS) MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
4 GOLD (DTS) X - MEN - 3
5 GOLD (DOLBY) THE DA VINCI CODE
6 GOLD (SDDS) THE DA VINCI CODE
7 GOLD (DOLBY) THE DA VINCI CODE
8 (DOLBY STEREO) OVER THE HEDGE
9 (DOLBY STEREO) POSEIDON
10 (DOLBY STEREO) THE DA VINCI CODE

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
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2 (DOLBY) X-MEN 3
3 (DOLBY) THE DA VINCI CODE
4 (DOLBY) THE DA VINCI CODE

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 X - MEN - 3
2 X - MEN - 3
3 OVER THE HEDGE
4 THE DA VINCI CODE

Blue Wave MARQUINTON
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
2 (DOLBY) OVER THE HEDGE
3 (DOLBY) X - MEN - 3
4 (DOLBY) THE DA VINCI CODE

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) X - MEN - 3
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
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5 OVER THE HEDGE

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 OVER THE HEDGE
2 (DTS) THE DA VINCI CODE
3 (DOLBY) X - MEN - 3
4 POSEIDON
Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 OVER THE HEDGE / MISSION IMPOSSIBLE
2 (DOLBY) X - MEN - 3
3 (DTS) THE DA VINCI CODE
4 POSEIDON
Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
3 (DOLBY) BANDIDAS
Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 SLITHER
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 (DOLBY) MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
4 (DTS) X - MEN - 3
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 X - MEN - 3
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 (DOLBY) MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Gapan)
1 X - MEN - 3
2 THE DA VINCI CODE

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 X - MEN - 3
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) THE DA VINCI CODE
5 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3

MARKETPLACE
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1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 POSEIDON
3 SILENT HILL
4 RESERVED

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8604285, 5433994
1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
3 X - MEN - 3
4 OVER THE HEDGE

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 POSEIDON / MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
2 X - MEN - 3
3 OVER THE HEDGE

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 X - MEN - 3

THEATRES
NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan, Telephone No. (044) 600-3025
1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
3 X - MEN - 3

Lianas Cinema (Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 SILENT HILL
2 POSEIDON
Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) THE DA VINCI CODE
2 SAYO ANG SARAP
3 VISIBLE SECRET -2
4 (DTS) SILENT HILL
Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) THE DA VINCI CODE
2 HIRAM
3 (DTS) X - MEN - 3
4 OVER THE HEDGE
5 MISSION IMPOSIBLE-3

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) THE DA VINCI CODE
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 (DTS EX) X - MEN - 3
4 OVER THE HEDGE

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 LIPSTIK
2 POSEIDON
3 THE DA VINCI CODE
4 X - MEN - 3

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
☆ X - MEN - 3
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Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
2 POSEIDON

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1 POSEIDON
2 KARELASYON

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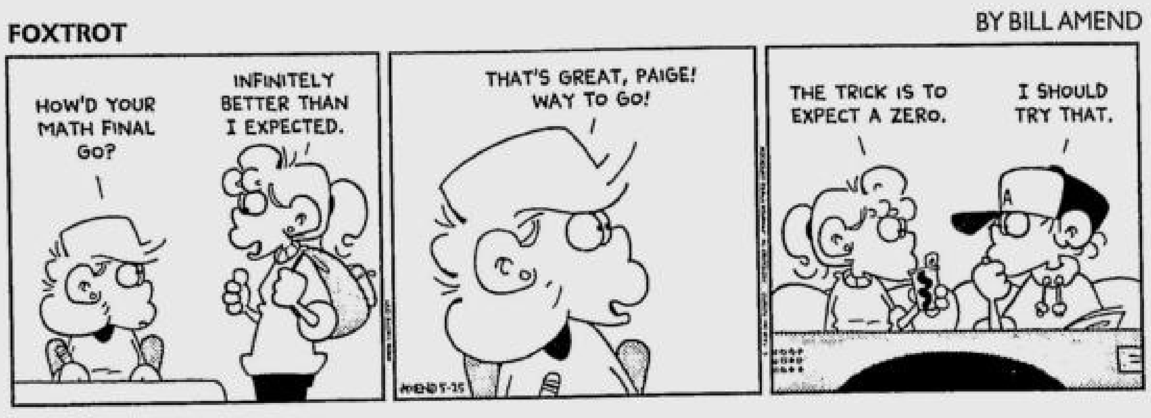
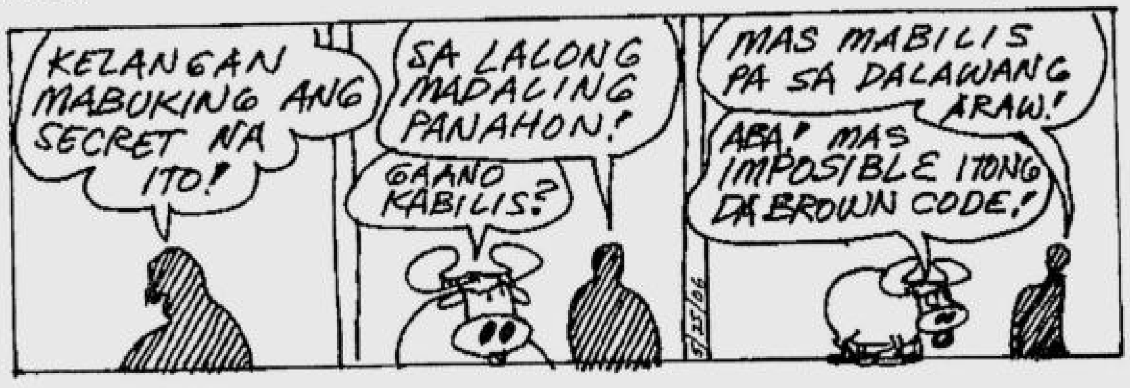
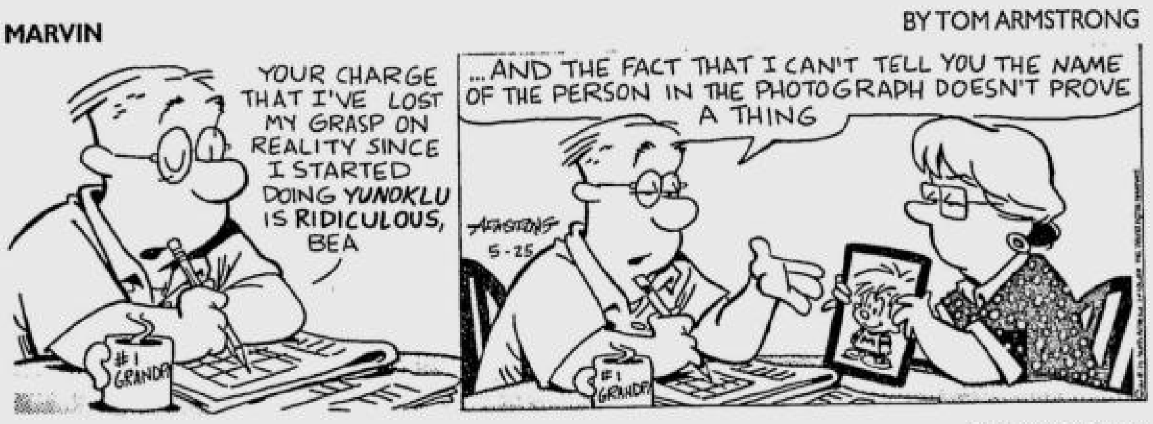
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


HOW'D YOUR MATH FINAL GO?
INFINITELY BETTER THAN I EXPECTED.
THAT'S GREAT, PAIGE! WAY TO GO!
THE TRICK IS TO EXPECT A ZERO.
I SHOULD TRY THAT.
AMEND 5-25

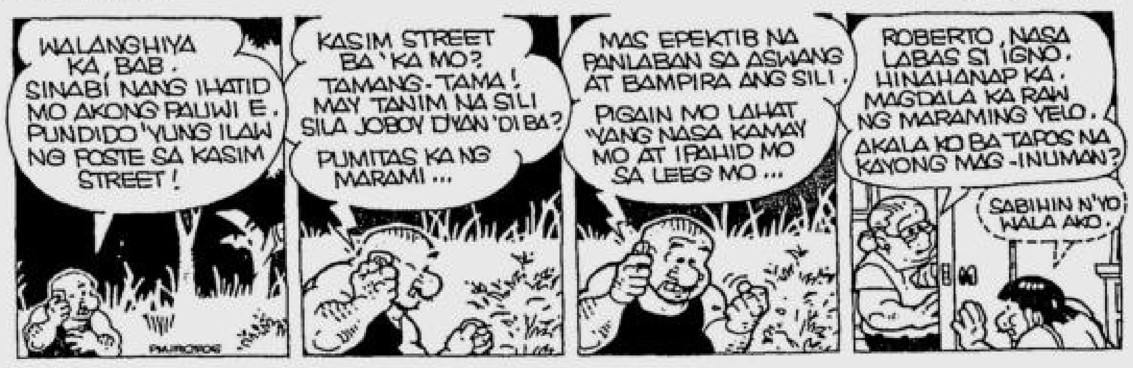
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


KELANGAN MABUKING ANG SECRET NA ITO!
SA LALONG MADALING PANAHON!
GAANO KABILIS?
MAS MABILIS PA SA DALAWANG ARAW!
ABA! MAS IMPOSIBLE ITONG DA BROWN CODE!
5/25/06

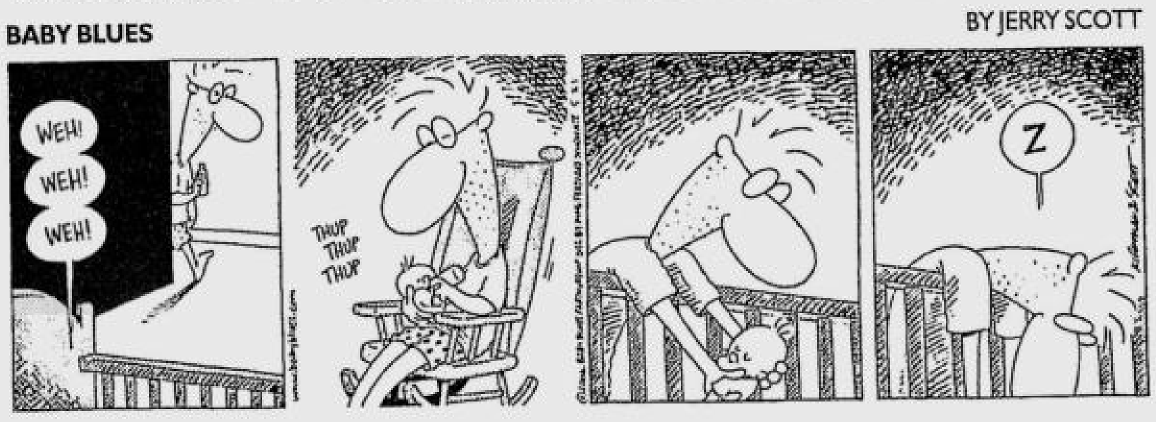
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


YOUR CHARGE THAT I'VE LOST MY GRASP ON REALITY SINCE I STARTED DOING YUNOKLU IS RIDICULOUS, BEA
...AND THE FACT THAT I CAN'T TELL YOU THE NAME OF THE PERSON IN THE PHOTOGRAPH DOESN'T PROVE A THING
#1 GRANDPA
ARMSTRONG 5-25

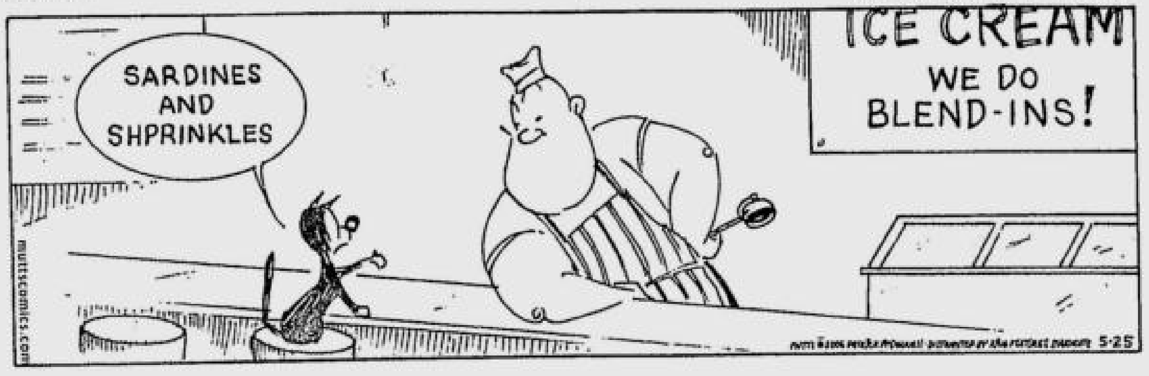
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


WALANGHIYA KA, BAB. SINABI NANG IHATID MO AKONG PAUWI E. PUNDIDO 'YUNG ILAW NG POSTE SA KASIM STREET!
KASIM STREET BA 'KA MO? TAMANG-TAMA! MAY TANIM NA SILI SILA JOBOY D'YAN 'DI BA?
PUMITAS KA NG MARAMI ...
MAS EPEKTIB NA PANLABAN SA ASWANG AT BAMPIRA ANG SILI.
PIGAIN MO LAHAT 'YANG NASA KAMAY MO AT IPAHID MO SA LEEG MO ...
ROBERTO, NASA LABAS SI IGNO. HINAHANAP KA. MAGDALA KA RAW NG MARAMING YELO.
AKALA KO BA TAPOS NA KAYONG MAG-INUMAN?
SABIHIN N'YO WALA AKO.

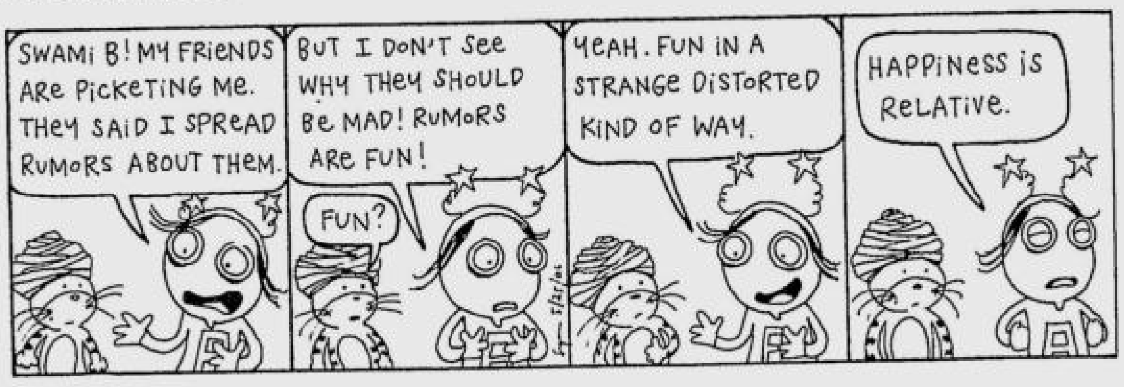
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


WEH!
WEH!
WEH!
THUP THUP THUP
Z

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

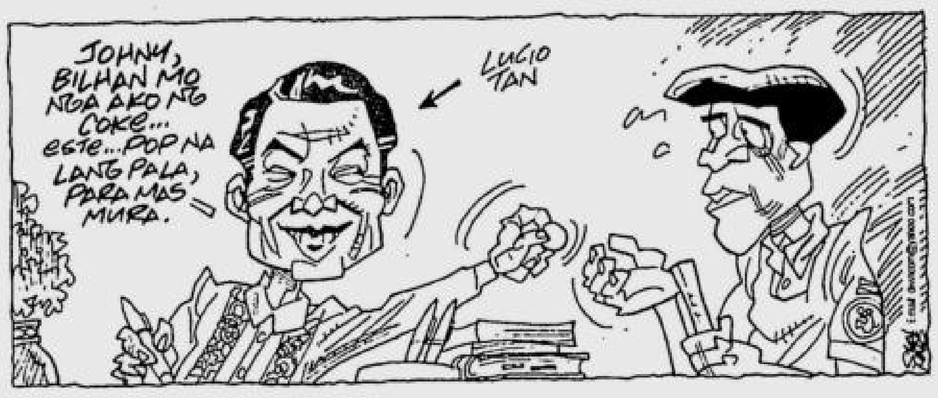

SARDINES AND SHPRINKLES
ICE CREAM
WE DO BLEND-INS!
muttscomics.com
5-25

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


SWAMI B! MY FRIENDS ARE PICKETING ME. THEY SAID I SPREAD RUMORS ABOUT THEM.
BUT I DON'T SEE WHY THEY SHOULD BE MAD! RUMORS ARE FUN!
FUN?
YEAH. FUN IN A STRANGE DISTORTED KIND OF WAY.
HAPPINESS IS RELATIVE.

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

SA HIRAP NG BUHAY NGAYON, HINDI LANG ANG MGA MAHIRAP ANG NAAPEKTUHAN KUNDI PATI MGA MAYAMAN


JOHNY, BILHAN MO NGA AKO NG COKE... ESTE...POP NA LANG PALA, PARA MAS MURA.
LUCIO TAN

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: No matter what you do for a living, basically, you're tough and you're a fighter. You're willing to work for what you want, and, among other things, you do like the trappings of success. You're passionate and easily express your affection to loved ones. You're also very resourceful and practical. Focus on partnerships this year.
Birthdate of: Miles Davis, jazz musician; Connie Sellecca, actress; Ian McKellen, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You have strong feelings of desire for someone today. (The real hots.) This might just be a passing thing. You often fall in love very easily—and just as easily out of love as well!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Time spent alone today might make you feel better. Solitude could replenish or restore your energy in some way. Something makes you feel better about yourself.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel very close to a friend today. In fact, this is the kind of day where friends could become lovers. Everybody feels a bit more passionate about everything!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): People are easily impressed with you today. You don't have to do anything special. People see you as powerful and knowledgeable.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're hungry to learn something today. You want adventure! Some of you will develop crush on or fall in love with somebody from another culture or a different background.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): The universe might give you a gift in some way today. People will do favors for you; some people might give you something outright. Just hope for the best.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Relationships are passionate and steamy today. Even friendships are rather intense. Nothing is casual. You take discussions with others very seriously now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Co-workers are enormously helpful today. You're surprised at how much you can get done when everybody lends a hand. Reduce clutter where you work. (Clean things up.)

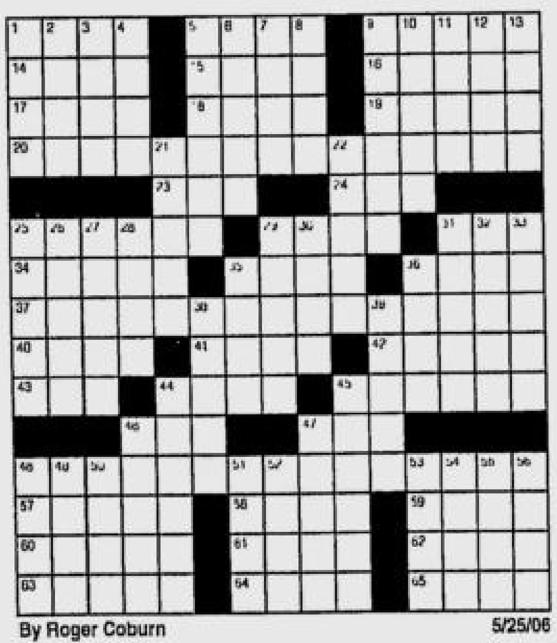
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might fall in love today (eyes across a crowded room and all that). The real reason is that you want passion and romance in your life. (Don't we all?) If you can find it, more power to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Make home repairs or improvements to your home today. You might want to buy something beautiful to enhance the appearance of your home.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Conversations are animated because you feel passionate about something today. You want others to know how you feel. (But how can you get something off your chest if you have to keep your shirt on?)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might buy something that's exciting and capable of changing your world in some way. Some of you will even see new ways or sources of earning money.

DAILY CROSSWORD

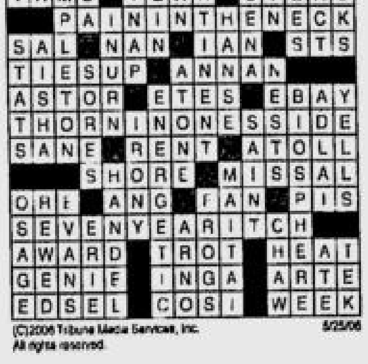


By Roger Coburn
Summerville, GA
5/25/06

ACROSS
1 Oater actor Jack
5 D-Day town
9 Clamping devices
14 Queue
15 Stuff
16 Related on mother's side
17 Kodak attachment
18 Keep in check
19 Brilliance
20 Start of quote
23 Primary color
24 __ excellence
25 __ d'etre
29 Styrene starter?
31 Actress Lupino
34 California desert town
35 Buddhist monk
36 Glitch
37 Part 2 of quote
40 Run without moving
41 Tennis champ Lendl
42 Seine feeder
43 __ Moines, IA
44 Nights before
45 Fondle
46 Raw mineral
47 Director Howard
48 End of quote and the speaker
57 Page or Lupone
58 Ye __ Shoppe
59 Give the green light to
60 Old English county
61 Attack
62 "Show Boat" composer Jerome
63 Sibilant letters
64 Gainsay
65 Punta del __, Uruguay

DOWN
1 Vocalist Fitzgerald
2 Made stuff up
3 "__ of the Thousand Days"
4 Tableland
5 TV surface
6 Prevailing force
7 Deposited
8 Present or potent starter?
9 MTV employee
10 Sustain
11 Mineo and Magile
12 Coup d'__
13 Stiff bristle
21 Sag
22 Impact sound
25 Stiff
26 Cathode's counterpart
27 False gods
28 Facet
29 Agouti's kin
30 Warning sign
31 Accustom
32 Repairs socks
33 "__ of God"
35 Bathe
36 Headliner
38 Resided
39 Muscat man
44 Pyle and Banks
45 "The __ of Errors"
46 Bizarre
47 French sculptor
48 Basilica area
49 Bleacher cheers
50 Elisha Graves of elevators
51 North of Paris
52 Winglike parts
53 Bit of humor
54 Hawaiian guitars, briefly
55 Flit
56 Unit of force

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved



M	U	S	E	■	C	O	M	P	■	G	A	V	E	L
E	M	I	L	■	A	L	O	E	■	A	M	A	N	A
T	A	M	S	■	T	E	A	R	■	L	I	L	A	C
■	■	P	A	I	N	I	N	T	H	E	N	E	C	K
S	A	L	■	N	A	N	■	I	A	N	■	S	T	S
T	I	E	S	U	P	■	A	N	N	A	N	■	■	■
A	S	T	O	R	■	E	T	E	S	■	E	B	A	Y
T	H	O	R	N	I	N	O	N	E	S	S	I	D	E
S	A	N	E	■	R	E	N	T	■	A	T	O	L	L
■	■	■	S	H	O	R	E	■	M	I	S	S	A	L
O	H	I	■	A	N	G	■	F	A	N	■	P	I	S
S	E	V	E	N	Y	E	A	R	I	T	C	H	■	■
A	W	A	R	D	■	T	R	O	T	■	H	E	A	T
G	E	N	I	E	■	I	N	G	A	■	A	R	T	E
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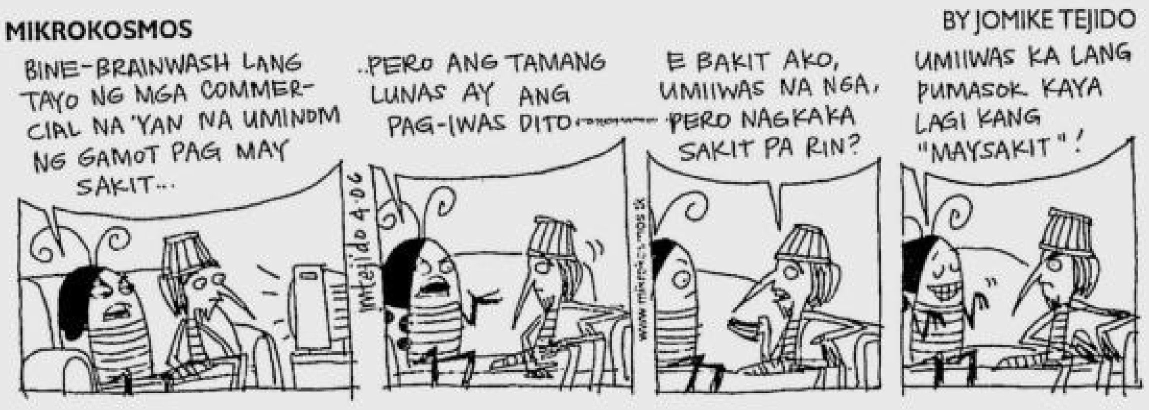
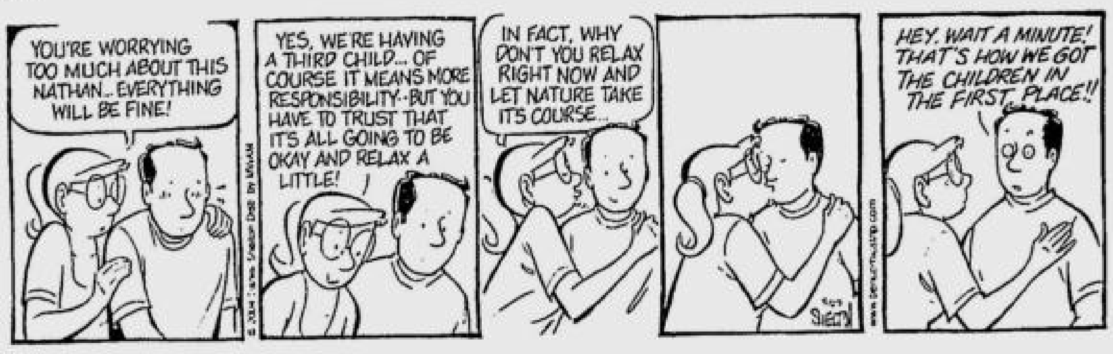
5/25/06

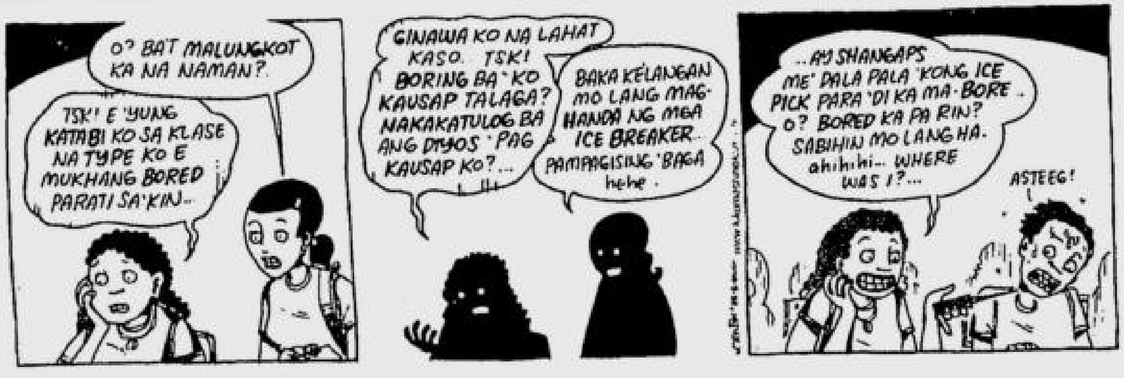
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BINE-BRAINWASH LANG TAYO NG MGA COMMERCIAL NA 'YAN NA UMINOM NG GAMOT PAG MAY SAKIT...
..PERO ANG TAMANG LUNAS AY ANG PAG-IWAS DITO
E BAKIT AKO, UMIIWAS NA NGA, PERO NAGKAKA SAKIT PA RIN?
UMIIWAS KA LANG PUMASOK KAYA LAGI KANG "MAYSAKIT"!
tejido 4-06

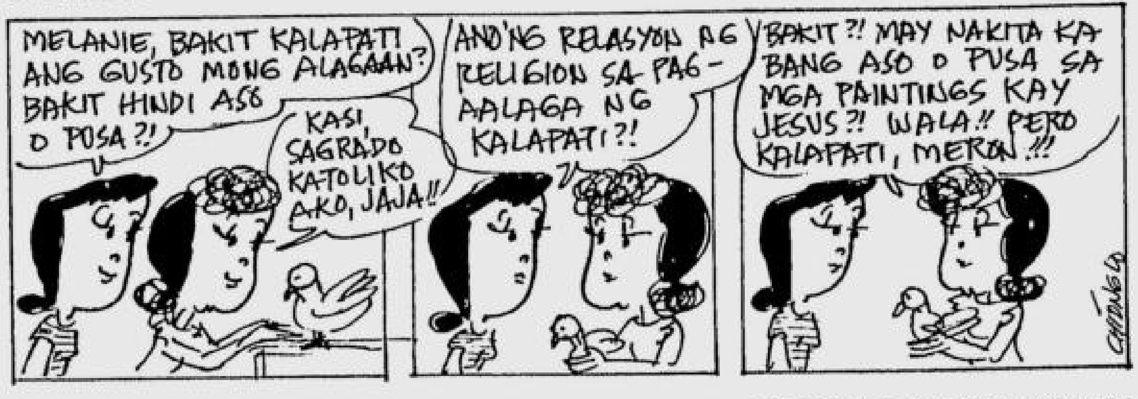
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


YOU'RE WORRYING TOO MUCH ABOUT THIS NATHAN.. EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE!
YES, WE'RE HAVING A THIRD CHILD... OF COURSE IT MEANS MORE RESPONSIBILITY--BUT YOU HAVE TO TRUST THAT ITS ALL GOING TO BE OKAY AND RELAX A LITTLE!
IN FACT, WHY DON'T YOU RELAX RIGHT NOW AND LET NATURE TAKE ITS COURSE...
HEY. WAIT A MINUTE! THAT'S HOW WE GOT THE CHILDREN IN THE FIRST PLACE!!
SHELTON

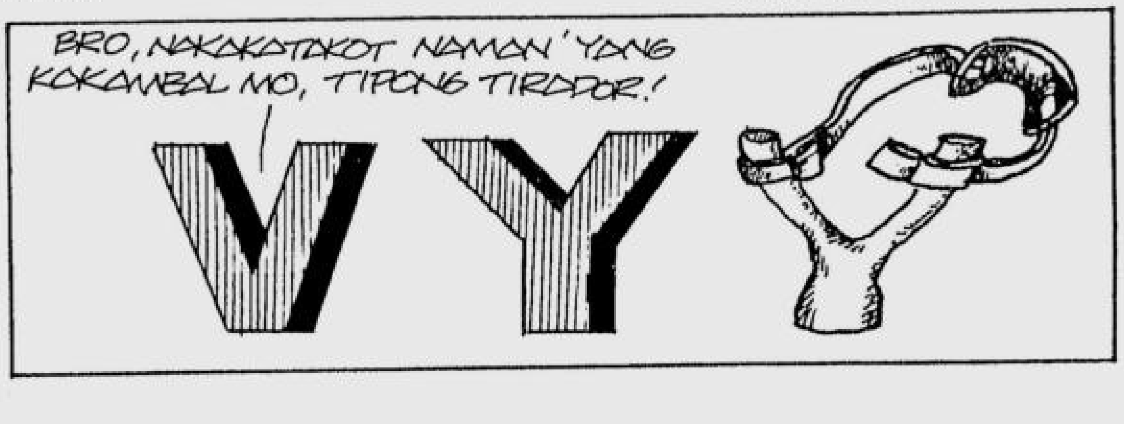
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


O? BAT MALUNGKOT KA NA NAMAN?
TSK! E 'YUNG KATABI KO SA KLASE NA TYPE KO E MUKHANG BORED PARATI SA'KIN..
GINAWA KO NA LAHAT KASO. TSK! BORING BA 'KO KAUSAP TALAGA? NAKAKATULOG BA ANG DIYOS 'PAG KAUSAP KO?...
BAKA KELANGAN MO LANG MAG-HANDA NG MGA ICE BREAKER. PAMPAGISING 'BAGA hehe.
...AY SHANGAPS ME' DALA PALA 'KONG ICE PICK PARA 'DI KA MA-BORE. O? BORED KA PA RIN? SABIHIN MO LANG HA. ahihihi... WHERE WAS I?...
ASTEEG!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MELANIE, BAKIT KALAPATI ANG GUSTO MONG ALAGAAN? BAKIT HINDI ASO O PUSA?!
KASI, SAGRADO KATOLIKO AKO, JAJA!!
ANO'NG RELASYON AG RELIGION SA PAG-AALAGA NG KALAPATI?!
BAKIT?! MAY NAKITA KA BANG ASO O PUSA SA MGA PAINTINGS KAY JESUS?! WALA!! PERO KALAPATI, MERON!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BRO, NAKAKATAKOT NAMAN 'YANG KAKAMBAL MO, TIPONG TIRADOR!
V
Y

Messy presentation and progression mar new series' launch

From page A2-6

progression.

In its effort to look lively and "now," the show develops its plot and characters in a jumbled-up way that makes it difficult for the production to consistently engage viewers' attention and empathy.

The people behind the show's cameras should stop calling attention to their jivey selves, and instead focus more productively on the interweaving stories they're telling.

After all, let's face it, viewers are more interested in the series' stars and plotline than anything else . . .

We also wonder why the show doesn't take full advantage of New York City's scenic delights. There's much more to the Big Apple than Times Square and other standard sights, of course.

Even more importantly, the series should also plug into the city's vibrant lifestyle. To date, the show has predictably focused on its Filipino characters, due to the fact that the production is intended for Pinoys.

> The show should plug into the Big Apple's vibrant lifestyle and idiosyncratic energy

Still, New York has an idiosyncratic energy that could make "I Luv NY" a truly lovely experience for viewers, if the new series takes better advantage of it.

On point of performance, Jolina is agreeably kooky, while Marvin plays it relatively sad and somber—an interesting contrast.

Alas, the younger players turn in less felicitous characterizations. Jennylyn is too floridly silly, while Mark resorts to his usual hip-hoppy shtick. This is momentarily diverting, but in an extended TV series, its appeal quickly palls.

Chasing celebrities

CNN has a fascinating documentary in store for viewers—"CNN Presents: Chasing Angelina—Paparazzi and Celebrity Obsession," set to telecast on June 3 at 2 p.m. and 10 p.m.

How far is too far to go for news on the stars' lives? CNN talks to all sides of the celebrity maze so viewers can decide for themselves.

Replays are at 3 a.m. and 2 p.m. on June 4, and 3 a.m. on June 5.

June on CNN also marks the launch of "The Boardroom," a new weekly segment offering insights into the minds of the world's top business leaders. "The Boardroom" airs every Tuesday at 9 p.m. during "World News Asia," Saturdays at 9 p.m., and Sundays at 10 p.m.

Finally, how will our lives look 25 years from now? In a unique global and multi-media initiative, "CNN Future Summit" brings together experts from all over the world to discuss the future of mankind. "CNN Future Summit" airs June 15 at 10 p.m., June 16 at 5 a.m., and June 17 at 2 p.m. and 10 p.m.

ARANETA CENTER
Gateway Ali MALL FarmersPlaza
THE ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY — Gateway CINEPLEX*10 — FULL STADIUM SEATING

Film	Schedule
X-MEN 3	11:00 / 12:5 / 12:40 / 1:15 2:25 / 3:00 / 3:35 / 4:45 5:20 / 5:55 / 7:05 / 7:40 8:15 / 9:25 / 10:00
THE DA VINCI CODE	11:15 / 11:50 / 12:25 / 1:00 2:15 / 2:50 / 3:25 / 4:00 5:15 / 5:50 / 6:25 / 7:00 8:15 / 8:50 / 9:25 / 10:00
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 10:00
OVER THE HEDGE	1:00 / 3:00 / 5:00 / 7:00 / 9:00
THE DA VINCI CODE	12:25 / 3:25 / 6:25 / 9:25

DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

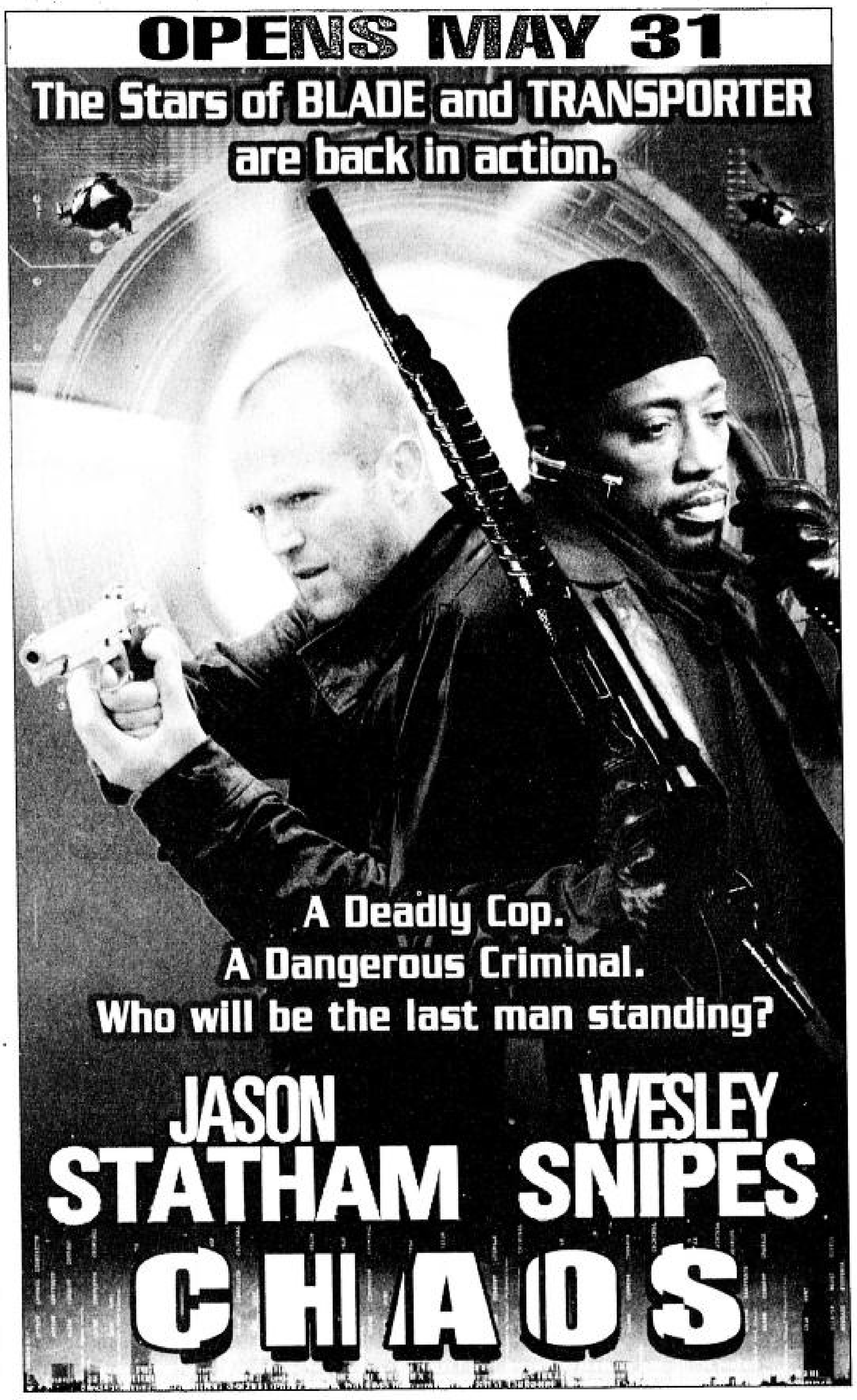
Ali MALL CINEMAS

Cinema	Film	Schedule
1	X-MEN 3	12:15 / 2:25 / 4:35 / 6:45 / 8:55
2	THE DA VINCI CODE	12:05 R3 / 2:20 / 5:15 / 8:10
3	THE DA VINCI CODE	12:05 / 3:00 / 5:55 / 8:50
4	OVER THE HEDGE	12:00 / 2:00 / 4:00 / 6:00 / 8:00
5	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: 3	12:15 / 2:55 / 5:35 / 8:15

DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
NOW SHOWING
GATEWAY CINEPLEX 10 & ALI MALL CINEMAS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The Stars of BLADE and TRANSPORTER are back in action.
A Deadly Cop.
A Dangerous Criminal.
Who will be the last man standing?
JASON STATHAM WESLEY SNIPES
CHAOS

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS
Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777
THX

Mall	Cinema	Film
G1 GLORIETTA 1	1	THE DA VINCI CODE
	2	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
	3	THE DA VINCI CODE
	4	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
	2	THE DA VINCI CODE
	3 THX	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND 12:50, 3:15, 5:40, 8:05, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	THE DA VINCI CODE
	5	OVER THE HEDGE
	6	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
	7	THE DA VINCI CODE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1	THE DA VINCI CODE
	2	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND 12:25, 2.45, 5:05, 9:45 GUARANTEED SEATS
	2 THX	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND 1:35, 3:55, 6:15, 10:55 GUARANTEED SEATS
	3	OVER THE HEDGE 12:50, 2:55, 5:00, 7.05, 9:10, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	THE DA VINCI CODE GUARANTEED SEATS
	5	THE DA VINCI CODE GUARANTEED SEATS
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
	2	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
	3	THE DA VINCI CODE
	4	OVER THE HEDGE
	5	THE DA VINCI CODE
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
	2	THE DA VINCI CODE
	3	THE DA VINCI CODE
	4	OVER THE HEDGE
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
	2	THE DA VINCI CODE
	3	OVER THE HEDGE
	4	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
	5	THE DA VINCI CODE

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Greenbelt - 752 4853; from 11am to 12mn
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

Venue	Event
GLORIETTA	AIM Event May 24 to 28, 2006
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Explore the world of your favorite Disney characters! May 1 to 31, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	PHILBEX Construction Show May 26 to 28, 2006
MARKET! MARKET!	Toni Gonzaga's You Complete Me mall tour May 27,2006
GREENBELT	Ayala Greenfield Exhibit May 13 to 27, 2006
Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents REPORTORY SUMMER CLASSESat REP's Globe Theater - May 20, 22, 23, 25, 26 , 27 & 29 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	PAROLA: Colonial Lighthouses in the Philippines May 18 to June 18, 2006 For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 loc 29 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org

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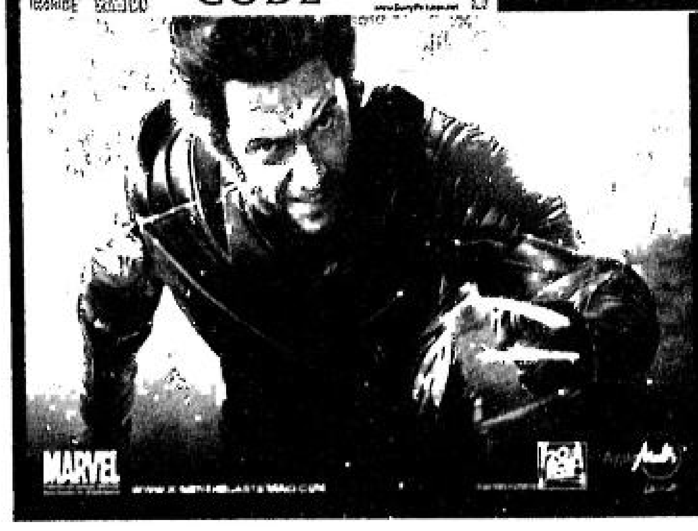
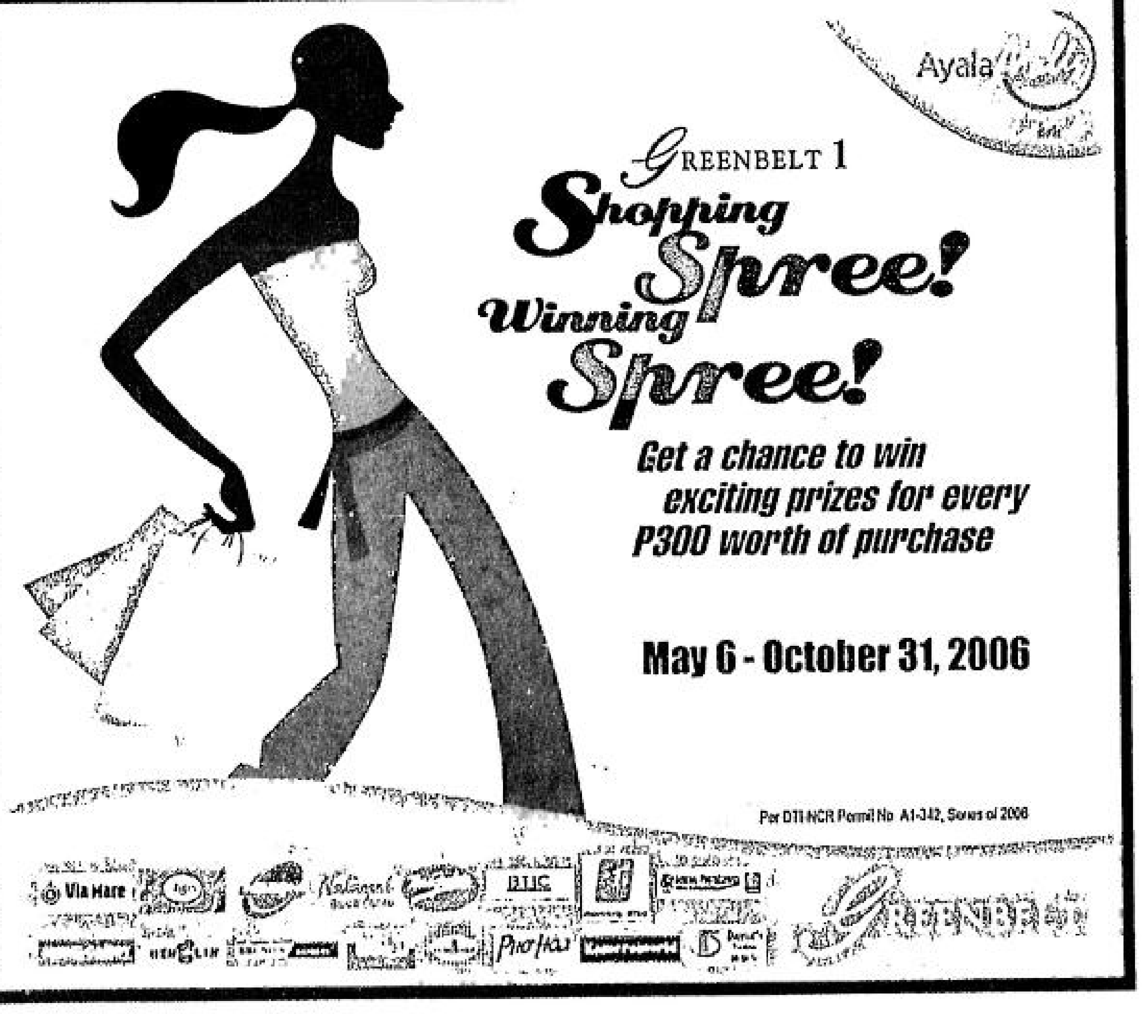
Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservation
For screening schedule, pls. call 729-7777
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R-18)


X-MEN THE LAST STAND
NOW SHOWING AT ALL AYALA MALLS CINEMAS
WHOSE SIDE WILL YOU BE ON?
For screening schedule, pls. call 729-777
Reserve your seat by texting SURESEATS GB3 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart). Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservation
MTRCB Rating: PG-13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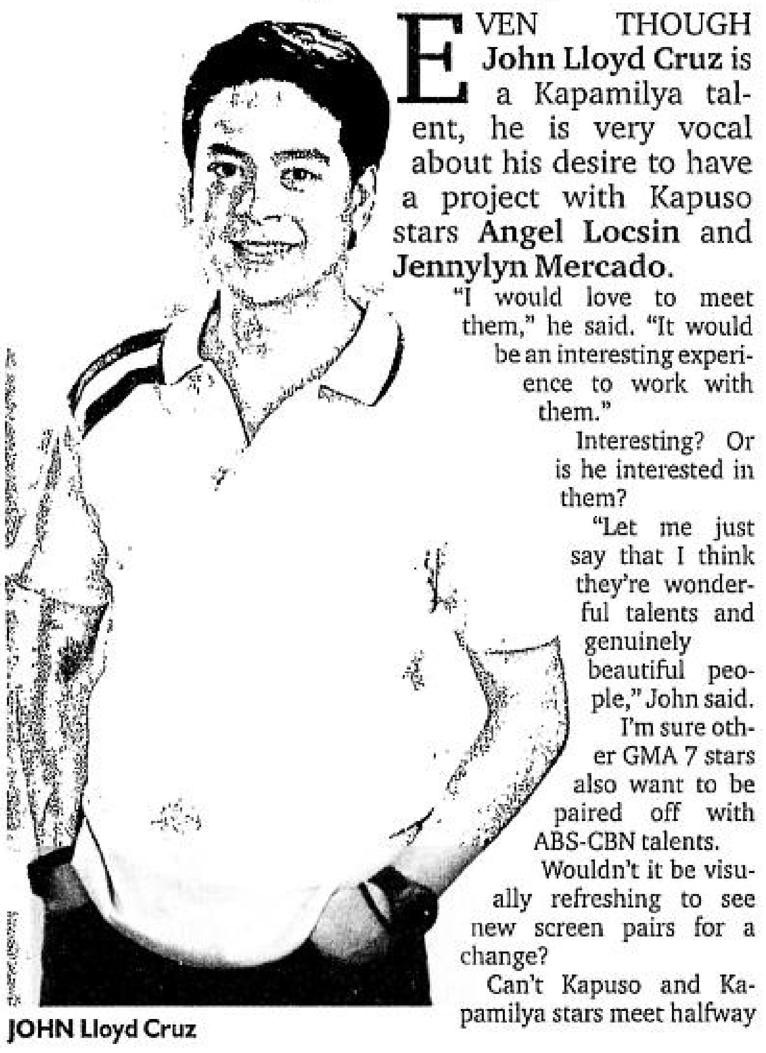
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A1-342, Series of 2006

ENTERTAINMENT

A Kapamilya and a Kapuso in one movie?


JOHN Lloyd Cruz

EVEN THOUGH **John Lloyd Cruz** is a Kapamilya talent, he is very vocal about his desire to have a project with Kapuso stars **Angel Locsin** and **Jennylyn Mercado.**

"I would love to meet them," he said. "It would be an interesting experience to work with them."

Interesting? Or is he interested in them?

"Let me just say that I think they're wonderful talents and genuinely beautiful people," John said.

I'm sure other GMA 7 stars also want to be paired off with ABS-CBN talents.

Wouldn't it be visually refreshing to see new screen pairs for a change?

Can't Kapuso and Kapamilya stars meet halfway and call themselves Kahati?

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

Network-hopping Patrick

Speaking of the battle of the networks, **Patrick Garcia** (a former ABS-CBN talent who's now with GMA 7) made it clear where his loyalties lie.

"The battle between the networks is not my war," he quipped. "I'm loyal to whoever is my current employer. I'm not expecting anything from GMA 7, but I want them to expect something from me."

Kudos to Patrick for not giving the usual show biz answer.

Bombshell's birthday

Rufa Mae Quinto is all fired up for her birthday concert, "Bombshell Unleashed," at the Aliw Theater on May 27.

"The show is filled with highlights," she enthused. "It's because I'm working with the best designers, singers, comedians, hunks and dancers. I'm nervous and excited. This is a first for me!"

Rufa Mae will be backed up by a full band as she sings pop, acoustic and soul hits.

Gender maze

I couldn't stop laughing when I overheard a young actor tell a gay comedian: "I get scared every time I bump into (name of a young TV host). He's tall, but it turns out he's gay. When will he come out of the closet?"

Will the TV host ever find his way out of the gender maze?

Last 'Challenge'

Paolo Bediones is not ending "Extra Challenge" with a heavy heart.

He insisted: "It's good to quit when you're on top."

Now that he won't be busy with the reality show, maybe his heart will finally have time to take the love challenge.

Gay pride

The movie "Manay Po" celebrates gay pride on its premiere night on May 29 at SM Megamall Cinema.

Scheduled are a gay fashion show and a special performance by the Raging Divas.

This is Mother **Lily Monteverde**'s way of thanking all the gays who have touched her life through the years.

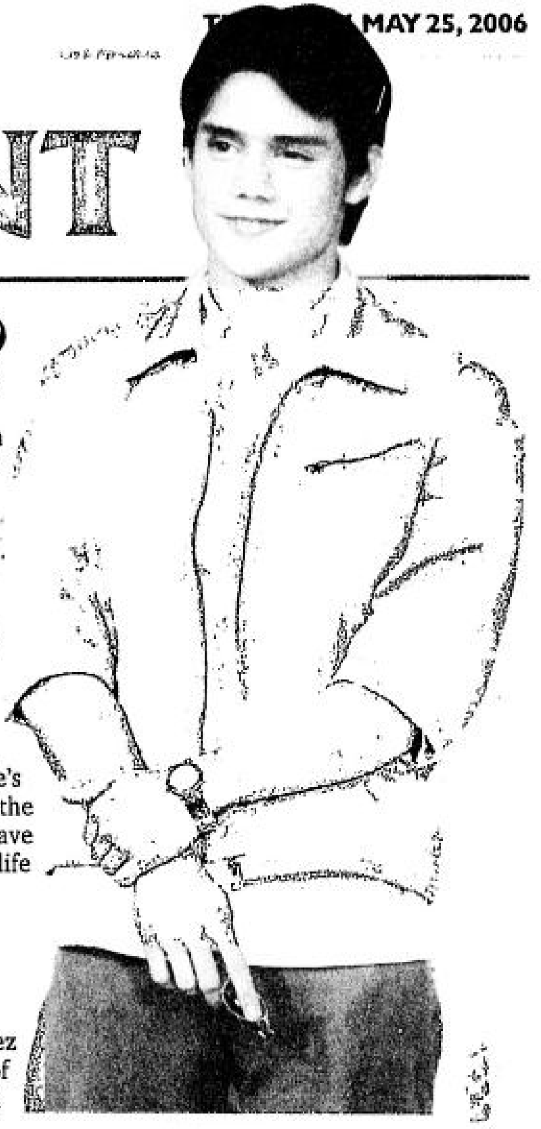
Like Joey, like Jeremy?

Jeremy Marquez is happy to be part of the cast of "Captain Barbell."

But he would've been happier if former girlfriend **Alessandra de Rossi** was still on hand to share his joys and career highs.

"I guess when it comes to love and career, one must suffer," he quipped. "My career is on the upswing but my love life is zero."

But he has remained friends with Alessandra. "I drove her to the airport when she left for Spain to shoot a movie there. I still want to do things for her."


PATRICK Garcia ERIK ARAZAS

Film-Am beauty

I enjoyed practicing my French with Miss Philippines-Air **Ginger Conejero**. We hit it off instantly! The Fil-Am beauty also won Miss Photogenic in the Miss Philippines Earth pageant.

Will she join show biz as most beauty queens do?

"I'm not closing my doors but my priority is to take up law in Los Angeles next year," she asserted.

Brothers with a mission

Brothers **Mon**, **Raffy** and **Erwin Tulfo** team up for "Isumbong Mo (Tulfo Brothers)," every Saturday on RPN 9.

According to Mon, the show is "action-oriented."

Erwin added: "There'll be no dead air. From start to finish you'll be glued."

Raffy promised: "No complaint will be left unanswered."

GINGER Conejero

Anna's spa

Singer **Anna Dizon** launches her Villa Ana Spa and Fruit Villa in Socorro, Oriental Mindoro on May 28. It's a complete sanctuary for both body and soul. Villa Anna has log houses, a fitness center, pool, horse-back riding area, sunflower farm,.fishpond, lagoon and aviary.

For feedback e-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com

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Christian Bautista & Jennylyn Mercado (May 27) Starmall Edsa

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For inquiries, call:
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MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	OVER THE HEDGE	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00	GP
2	X-MEN 3	12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 8:10, 10:50	PG-13
3	THE DA VINCI CODE	12:30, 3:50, 7:15, 10:40	R-18
4	THE DA VINCI CODE	11:30, 2:40, 6:00, 9:30	R-18

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Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

X-MEN: THE LAST STAND PG13 12:35,2:55,5:15, 7:35,9:55	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND PG13 1:45,4:05,6:25,8:45	THE DA VINCI CODE R18 1:00,4:00,7:00,10:00
X-MEN: THE LAST STAND PG13 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:30	OVER THE HEDGE G 12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00	X-MEN: THE LAST STAND PG13 12:00,2:20,4:40, 7:00,9:20

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SHANG CINEPLEX
① X-MEN 3 MTRCB PG-13 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30
② X-MEN 3 MTRCB PG-13 11:40, 2:00 4:20, 6:40 9:00
③ THE DA VINCI CODE MTRCB R-18 1.20, 4.25, 7.30,10:35
④ THE DA VINCI CODE MTRCB R-18 11:45, 2 50, 5:55, 9:00
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WHOSE SIDE WILL YOU BE ON?
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X-MEN
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MARK Herras, Jennylyn Mercado, Jolina Magdangal and Marvin Agustin in "I Luv NY"

Messy presentation and progression mar new series' launch

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LIKE ABS-CBN'S "Bituing Walang Ningning," GMA 7's "I Luv NY" also made its debut on the TV screen last May 15. We've caught four of the show's first telecasts and have these initial reactions to share:

The new series takes advantage of Pinoy viewers' abiding interest in and even fixation on the United Sates, and crafts a mix of individual stories that enable its four lead players to interact in a diverting romantic-comedy fashion in New York City.

Jolina Magdangal plays a "TNT" Pinay who holds many jobs, all of them beyond the pale of the law.

Marvin Agustin is an unhappy young executive who works legally in the US, but bemoans his faithless love and generally unmoored state of life.

Jennylyn Mercado is even more adrift, a petulant and spoiled young woman who ends up running away from home and is forced to deal with life's difficult realities for the first time.

Lastly, **Mark Herras** flies to the States to seek his fortune, only to be goosed by the fickle finger of fate and get thrown into the company of the series' other three leads.

That thumbnail sketch looks pretty good on paper, but on the small screen, it's compromised by a rather messy presentation and

MESSY/ A2-5

BUSINESS
Website: www.inq7money.net
Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma
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From Pagudpud to Sorsogon
1114 km*
on just one full tank.
XTRA
*Actual test result on a 1300 cc vehicle, as certified true by Automobile Association of the Philippines and Car Awards Group, Inc.
PETRON

Peso nears 53 to $1, closes at 4-month low

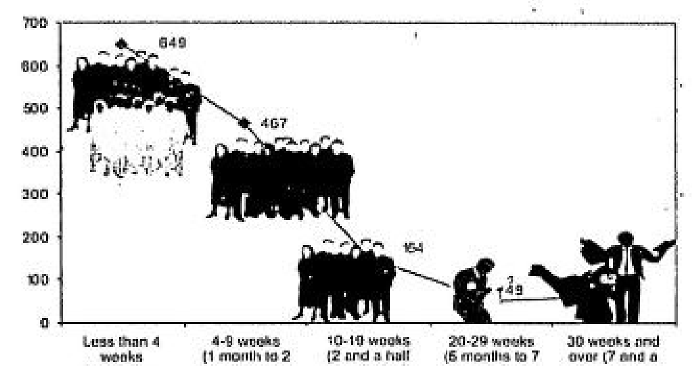
INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

About two months looking for a job

(In thousands, as of January 2006)

Of the 2.8 million Filipinos unemployed as of January 2006, nearly half-or 1.38 million-looked for work. Of this number, most (47 percent, or 649,000) spent less than a month at it. Unemployed Pinoys spent an average of seyen and a half weeks jobhunting.



Source: Highlights of the January 2006 Labor Force Survey Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics

Kate Pedroso PDI Research

Bangko Sentral selling stems further slide

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY SLID TO 52.95:$1 IN INTRA-DAY TRADE on regional jitters caused by a renewed Asian bird flu scare, which added to pressure caused by a two-week selldown on emerging markets' bonds and currencies.

Local currency traders said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas sold dollars at 52.95 to stem the peso's depreciation. The local currency thus recovered slightly but still closed at a new four-month low of 52.85 against Tuesday's 52.78 against the greenback.

It was the peso's weakest closing since hitting 52.875 to a dollar last January. Volume traded at the Philippine Dealing System amounted to $547.2 million.

With the local currency nearing the 53 level, it has nearly wiped out the gains seen so far this year. At end-2005, the peso closed at 53.09 to a dollar.

Other Asian currencies led by the Indonesian rupiah likewise tumbled on fears of the first possible case of human-to-human transmission of bird flu in Indonesia.

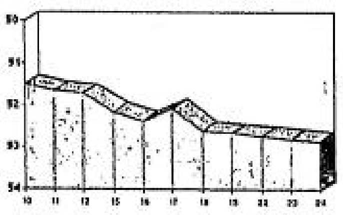
At the same time, traders said offshore investors continued to unwind portfolio exposure in emerging markets, leading to currency sell-offs.

Local currency traders said the BSP sold only about $10 million at the spot foreign market, but as soon as the market saw this in-

PESO/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱52.85 = $1

As of 5 p.m., May 24, 2006

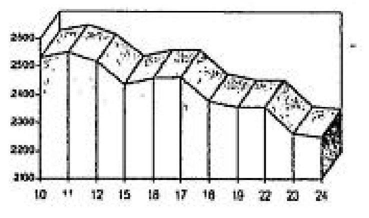
¥111.88 = $1

As of 5 p.m., May 24, 2006

GOLD: $668.30-668.80

per ounce Hong Kong, May 24, 2006

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B2)

PRONE TO ABUSE, FRAUD

Abolition of tax credits pushed

By Michelle V. Remo

AUTHORITIES PLAN TO ABOLISH THE TAX credit system as abuse and fraudulent activities related to the use of tax credit certificates (TCCs) have been blamed for huge revenue losses for the debt-ridden government.

The Senate committee on ways and means, headed by Sen. Ralph Recto, yesterday proposed in a hearing on economic bills that the government should already do away with the tax credit system. Instead, Recto said, the government should automatically allot a portion of the national budget for tax refunds and fiscal incentives.

Under the tax credit system, businesses that have claims for tax refunds or fiscal incentives are given TCCs, the amount of which can be deducted from their tax liabilities. Recipients of TCCs include exporters, who are granted the incentive for their dollar contributions to the country, and companies that have claims for input VAT credits.

The government instituted the use of TCCs because it did not readily have the funds to accommodate claims for tax refunds and fiscal incentives.

But Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran

ABOLITION/ B2

WHAT'S INSIDE

Breaktime: Hinder the table /B2

HK firm eyes 5% stake in PSE /B2

IMF urges RP to carry out more reforms /B6

SM firms up grip on EPCIB

THE SM GROUP FIRMED UP ITS GRIP ON Equitable PCI Bank by getting five seats in the 15-member board of the country's third biggest lender.

During the stockholders' meeting and board elections which lasted past 8 p.m. Tuesday, the Romualdez family's Trans Middle East Equity Philippines Inc. was not allowed to vote on its 7.13-percent stake in the bank given a restraining order from the Sandiganbayan.

During the elections, the SM group increased its board representation from four to five: Teresita Sy, Josefina Tan, Edmundo Tan, Exequiet Villacor-

SM FIRMS/ B2

Shares close lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.52 percent lower yesterday, tracking overnight losses on Wall Street although last minute bargain-hunting helped cushion the fall, dealers said.

They said the recent sell-off in regional bourses suggested institutional investors were re-aligning portfolios given the prospect of rising interest rates in major global economies.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite

SHARES/ B2

Emotion. Not wasted motion.
5
BMW 5 Series

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Hinder the table

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

ACTING AS EQUITABLE PCI BANK CHAIR during the annual stockholders' meeting, SSS boss Corazon dela Paz announced the bank has no "merger proposal on the table."

It's hard to say if what she actually meant was, well, that the "proposal" was being worked out by unseen political hands under the table.

I just know that Dela Paz thought that her audience, including the millions of working-class SSS members, was nothing but fools.

Dela Paz, you see, has become the key ally of the SM group of mall operator Henry Sy in its scheme to gobble up EPCIB—the country's third largest lender.

The group wanted to do that by simply forcing upon the stockholders of EPCIB the supposed "merger" with its very own Banco de Oro—ranked ninth largest.

It was actually a takeover scheme, with BDO absorbing the whole of EPCIB, and just like that, the SM group would control a large bank for a song.

According to the SM group's chief ally Dela Paz, the "merger proposal" from BDO already lapsed.

WHAAAT? It's not as if covetousness has an expiry date on the label!

Don't tell me that Dela Paz believes the SM group would get a bad stomach if it would swallow EPCIB whole after the date. The bank is not fresh milk or something.

After all, the SM group already, er, EXTENDED its "merger proposal" after it also LAPSED one time, because it met strong resistance from the minority stockholders GSIS and Trans Middle East.

In the business game, there is no such thing as limit to one's hunger for wealth. There's no rationing here! How hard is it, anyway, for the SM group to shove the same proposal to EPCIB over and over again until it finally gets what it wants?

* * *

OBVIOUSLY Dela Paz was only trying to pacify the mob at the EPCIB annual stockholders' meeting the other day.

In the first place, the so-called merger proposal created all the fuzz about the bank in media and even in the stock market. Everybody was watching Dela Paz—not to mention her principal.

Under the takeover scheme of the SM group, the Sy family can acquire a powerhouse in banking, EPCIB being the third largest domestic bank, by spending only P10 billion to P12 billion tops.

By the way, the SSS and the GSIS used the funds of its members—meaning, you and me—to invest something like P20 billion in the bank.

Please remember that the GSIS and the SSS were duped in their investment. Their supposed partner in buying the old PCI Bank, the Go family of the then Equitable Bank, did not put up the corresponding P16 billion. The Go family used the funds of PCI Bank, particularly its fat FCDU accounts—meaning, the dollar deposits of its clients.

What happened to the P16 billion of the bank funds used by the Go family was another issue that Dela Paz promised the mob she would investigate, apparently also to sue for temporary peace with the restless stockholders.

Thus, her "no-merger-proposal-on-the-table" line will backfire one of these days, or as soon as the SM group resumes its relentless pursuit for EPCIB.

Those unresolved issues still hound and will hound the bank, particularly because it is a publicly listed company as it is, hindering its growth.

That's why EPCIB will get embroiled in more court cases, because minority stockholders, such as Trans Middle East or even the GSIS, will continue to oppose the SM group in taking over the bank.

Really, the storm over the P20-billion investment of the pension funds GSIS and SSS will not die down, just because Dela Paz swept the "merger proposal" under the table.

* * *

FROM WHAT I gathered, taipan George Ty (banking, insurance, car manufacturing, real estate, power generation, etc.) is going to form a holding company for all his business interests.

It seems that the taipan is also grooming newly elected Metrobank chair Antonio Abacan to become vice chair of the holding company.

Abacan took over from George Ty as chair upon the latter's retirement a couple of weeks ago. (Taking the place of Abacan as Metrobank president was George Ty's son Arthur. The other son, Alfred, who is married to a daughter of taipan Lucio Tan, oversees the group's interest in real estate.)

Anyway, it is well known that, in the Metrobank group, or the other businesses of George Ty for that matter, the chair is actually a working post.

If I read right the group's reorganization of sorts, George Ty must be taking a serious look at expanding his power generation business, particularly in the Visayas.

Of course George Ty himself will serve as chair of the new firm. And everybody thought that he already … well, "retired."

HK firm eyes 5% stake in PSE

₱155-M infusion seen boosting demutualization plan

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HONG KONG INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT firm Value Partners Ltd. (VPL) has offered to buy up to 5 percent or P155.4 million worth of shares of the Philippine Stock Exchange, boosting the latter's efforts to become a fully "demutualized" company.

The PSE's demutualization refers to its conversion from a company previously controlled by stockbrokers to being widely owned by the public or other stockholders.

In a letter of intent addressed to PSE president Francis Lim, VPL senior fund manager Norman Ho said the company was interested in acquiring more PSE shares.

VPL, a Hong Kong-based investment management firm founded in 1993, owns 8,340 PSE shares through small open market purchases.

It proposed to buy an additional 740,258 shares at P210 each to bring its stake up to 5 percent as allowed by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). PSE closed at P200 a share yesterday.

But some stockbrokers said VPL had to improve its offer.

"I think it is not high enough to attract a lot of takers because we are hitting record volumes," PSE director and Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said.

VPL is focused on participating in the growth of "great-but-under appreciated" Asian businesses as supportive shareholders.

It manages more than $3 billion in funds from individual and institutional savings.

Ho said that after positive feedback from Lim and conducting a due diligence on the PSE, VPL was "more than comfortable becoming a shareholder" and assisting in the PSE's ongoing demutualization efforts.

VPL's letter of intent, however, merely indicated its intention and did not create a binding obligation for either party. The terms set forth in the letter were still subject to negotiations.

Lim, in a letter sent to brokers, said the actual number of PSE shares to be sold to VPL would be subject to the mutual agreement between parties involved in the transaction. Under a possible mutual agreement, VPL may complete the transaction by buying from a broker of its choice. All brokers interested in unloading their PSE shares to VPL were urged to submit a letter of intent specifying the number of shares they wanted to sell.

The PSE is 40-percent owned by public and private institutions. Less than 43 percent are held by active stockbrokers.

Last year, a fund affiliate of Equinox Partners bought additional PSE shares from Singaporean investment firm Kim Eng Group, resulting in the exit of the latter as owners of PSE shares. The Equinox Group, through global custodian Goldman Sachs and local custodian Standard Chartered Bank, recently assigned its proxies to ATR Kim-Eng Securities for the latter to vote the shares during the recent PSE stockholders' meeting

Other major institutions which own PSE shares are the retirement funds of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and San Miguel Corp., and state pension fund Government Service and Insurance System.

SM firms up …

From page B1

ta Jr. and Antonio Henson who was joining the board for the first time.

Likewise dropped from the new board was independent director Anthony Te, who was replaced by former Tourism Secretary Peter Garrucho, previously a member of the bank's advisory board.

The other members of the new EPCIBank board were reelectionists: Dela Paz, GSIS president Winston Garcia, EPCIBank president Rene Buenaventura, Nazario Cabuquit Jr., Fulgencio Factoran Jr., Ma. Luz Generoso, Ramon Jabar, Reynaldo Palmiery and Jesus Tirona.

During the organizational meeting that followed, the new board reelected Dela Paz as bank chair while Garcia and Sy remained as vice chair. Sy will also continue to chair the five-member executive committee that includes Dela Paz, Buenaventura, Factoran and Garcia.

Meanwhile, former Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes was appointed to join the four-member advisory board which also included Ricardo Leong, former Monetary Board member Teodoro Montecillo and Antonio Pacis. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Shares close lower …

From page B1

index fell 11.78 points to 2,252.52 after trading between 2,249.28 and 2,271.42.

Volume totaled 2.44 billion shares worth P2.68 billion.

The broader all-shares index fell 9.38 points to 1,409.98. Losers outnumbered gainers 57 to 39, while 48 stocks were unchanged.

"The market went through a steep two-day fall, and a recovery from that drop is expected (in the coming sessions). But in the meantime, we're still going through a consolidation phase," said Harry Liu of Summit Securities.

"The market still has to digest the recent sharp swing in prices as well as concerns over rising interest rates," said Liu.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was the most actively traded stock. It closed down P5 at P1,955. Rival Globe Telecom Inc. ended P45 higher at P885.

Ayala Corp. gained P7.50 to close at P400 due to bargain-hunting after Tuesday's slide.

San Miguel's A-shares, restricted to Filipinos, gained 50 centavos to P63 while its B-shares, which foreigners can buy, fell P3 to P78. *AFP*

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Abolition of tax credits pushed

From page B1

said that if the government would officially include in the national budget the expenditures for servicing claims of tax refunds and fiscal incentives, then insufficiency of funds would no longer be a problem.

He said that the government should allot between P2 billion and P3 billion in its annual budget to service claims for tax refunds and fiscal incentives.

Beltran said giving cash refunds was a better system than giving out TCCs because the former prevents fraud arising from the use of the tax credits.

The government has estimated that it lost about P5.2 billion in revenues due to tax credit fraud that was discovered in the late 1990s. The tax credit scam involved the use of fake and fraudulently secured TCCs, which syndicates sold to firms that, in turn, used them as payment for their tax obligations.

The substantial increase in claims for tax credits was partly blamed by the Bureau of Internal Revenue for its collection shortfall last April. The BIR collected only P71.3 billion compared with its P78.6-billion target.

The finance official said the Senate committee on ways and means was looking at including the proposed scrapping of the tax credit system as one of the provisions of the fiscal incentives rationalization bill, one of the revenue-raising measures being pushed by the Arroyo administration.

But Recto said his committee would study whether the proposal would still need legislation. If not, then the government could simply issue an executive or administrative order to implement the proposal.

The fiscal incentives rationalization bill is one of the legislative items that the Senate is rushing this year. The bill basically aims to plug huge foregone revenues due to the granting of various fiscal incentives.

Estimates by the Department of Finance showed that the government lost P282 billion in potential revenue collection in 2004 alone due to the granting of fiscal incentives.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 24, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.3	90,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	36	37	35	37	198,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	61	62	60	61.5	3,089,900
China Banking Corp.	890	905	890	905	18,080
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	19	19	19	19	2,300
Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	500
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	4,310,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	71	71	60	60	161,200
International Exch. Bank	41	41	41	41	98,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	38.5	38.5	37	37.5	368,600
Philippine National Bank	34.5	34.5	34	34	1,600
Phil. Savings Bank	39	39.5	39	39.5	12,200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.25	26,000
Security Bank Corp.	48	50	48	50	177,600
Union Bank of the Phil.	45	45	45	45	18,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	11,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1780	1780	1780	1780	160
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	670,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2050	2050	2050	2050	1,010
Ivantage Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.06	1.08	2,224,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	46.5	46.5	46.5	46.5	269,800
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	46	46.5	46	46.5	511,300
Manila Electric Co. A	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.25	23,800
Manila Electric Co. B	20.25	20.75	20.25	20.5	1,444,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7.1	7.2	7	7	2,094,000
Petron Corp.	4.25	4.25	4.2	4.2	6,301,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	300,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	82,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	15,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.25	23.5	23.25	23.25	15,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	36	36	35	35.5	110,800
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	300,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	338,000
San Miguel Corp. A	62	63	61.5	63	358,200
San Miguel Corp. B	79.5	79.5	77.5	78	408,100
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.25	460,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	1,600,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	140,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.26	1.28	5,760,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.3	1.6	1.2	1.6	80,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.5	1,746,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	5,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.3	1.34	1.1	1.1	684,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.1	0.1	300,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	700,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	395	400	395	400	1,164,380
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.59	0.6	0.59	0.6	220,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	2,897,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.028	0.028	0.026	0.027	7,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.2	3,836,000
APC Group Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	450,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.89	0.95	0.89	0.92	800,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	30,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.9	9.9	9.8	9.8	63,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.08	3,756,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.85	3.85	3.8	3.8	793,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.1	3.15	3.05	3.1	125,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	50,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.7	472,000
Keppel Holdings	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Keppel Holdings B	1	1	1	1	1,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.18	2,940,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	5,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	100,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.13	1,730,000
SM Investments Corp.	226	226	220	220	248,990
South China Resources Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	50,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	1,100,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.105	0.105	1,700,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	12.75	12.75	12.25	12.5	22,780,600
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.08	1.04	1.08	2,952,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.58	1.58	2,366,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,350,000
Cebu Holdings, Inc.	2.14	2.14	2.1	2.12	1,030,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.02	1.02	1	1	470,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	298,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	3,140,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.59	0.59	16,200,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings, Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	10,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.042	0.042	0.04	0.04	4,400,000
Filinvest Land, Inc.	1.36	1.38	1.32	1.34	10,108,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.09	0.09	400,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	80,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.23	0.24	0.215	0.24	510,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	310,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.58	1.6	1.58	1.58	5,202,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.245	0.245	0.21	0.21	43,930,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	11	11	11	11	39,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.32	0.32	0.27	0.3	260,000
SM Development Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	370,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.6	7.7	7.5	7.5	15,491,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.25	14.75	14.25	14.75	90,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	8,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.14	1.2	1.14	1.18	13,353,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	860	890	860	885	314,460
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	4,031,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1955	1960	1950	1955	307,000
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.195	0.2	1,020,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.05	0.05	0.049	0.049	1,000,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.2	1.2	233,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.029	0.029	283,800,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	30,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	42,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	12.75	13	12.75	13	275,600
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	20,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.2	1.32	1.2	1.32	105,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.52	1.54	1,058,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc	0.56	0.59	0.56	0.59	1,440,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.9	12,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Jardine Davies Inc.	18	18	18	18	100
Macroasia Corp.	2.08	2.1	2	2	185,000
Paxys Inc.	11	11.25	11	11	560,300
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	3.4	3.4	3	3.1	5,761,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	3.45	3.45	3.05	3.05	7,357,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	49,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.5	7.6	7.2	7.2	4,110,000
Benguet Corp. A	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	1,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.3	28,540,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.34	16,890,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	147,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	279,800,000
Omico Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.008	838,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4	4.15	3.95	3.95	14,916,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4.05	4.15	3.95	3.95	22,595,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27	27.5	27	27.5	71,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	50,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.51	0.54	0.51	0.51	2,280,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	370,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	508,400,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	5,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.06	1.16	1.06	1.1	2,841,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.16	1.16	1.1	1.1	1,023,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	14.25	14.5	13.75	13.75	767,500
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,400
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(PDR)	14.25	14.75	14.25	14.5	858,500

CURRENCIES

May 24, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.779180	1.000000	52.7220
Japan	Yen	0.006974	0.008950	0.4719
United Kingdom	Pound	1.466028	1.881500	99.1964
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100473	0.128947	6.7983
Switzerland	Franc	0.644804	0.827541	43.6296
Canada	Dollar	0.694271	0.891027	46.9767
Singapore	Dollar	0.493027	0.632751	33.3599
Australia	Dollar	0.587794	0.754375	39.7722
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.067614	2.653576	139.9018
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.207826	0.266724	14.0622
Brunei	Dollar	0.491473	0.630756	33.2547
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000108	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020397	0.026178	1.3802
UAE	Dirham	0.212195	0.272331	14.3578
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.283400	67.6634
Argentina	Peso	0.254218	0.326264	17.2013
Brazil	Real	0.345842	0.443853	23.4008
Denmark	Kroner	0.134122	0.172132	9.0751
India	Rupee	0.017170	0.022036	1.1618
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215660	0.276778	14.5923
Mexico	New Peso	0.068933	0.088468	4.6642
New Zealand	Dollar	0.485986	0.623714	32.8834
Norway	Kroner	0.127525	0.163666	8.6288
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012988	0.016669	0.8788
South Africa	Rand	0.119776	0.153721	8.1045
Korea	Won	0.000826	0.001060	0.0559
Sweden	Kroner	0.107155	0.137523	7.2505
Syria	Pound	0.015010	0.019264	1.0156
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024384	0.031294	1.6499
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000363	0.000466	0.0246

Promise of federalism in Mindanao

(Last of two parts)

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

IT IS IRONIC THAT AN ISLAND THAT HOLDS so much promise of prosperity is home to millions of poor families.

The National Statistical Coordination Board said in its 2000 poverty incidence report that almost 30 percent of the population in Mindanao was poor.

Sulu was cited as the poorest province in the Philippines, with the highest poverty incidence of 63.2 percent.

Tawi-Tawi followed with 56.5 percent; Maguindanao; 55.1 percent; Lanao del Sur, 55 percent; Sultan Kudarat, 54.3 percent; and Camiguin, 53.1 percent.

The peace process involving the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP), Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), and the Mindanao peace movement, is also a major concern that needs to be addressed at the structural, social, cultural and religious levels.

These issues weighing on Mindanao gave Mindanaons a reason to meet and discuss the possible ways to achieve a progressive and peaceful Mindanao.

One of the proposed solutions that came up was the shift to a federal form of government.

The movement toward a federal Philippines started in December 1999, when federal advocates from the Mindanao Congress of Development NGOs network assembled and created Lihok Pideral Mindanao (LPM).

That eventually led to the creation of the Movement for a Federal Philippines (MFP).

What was once a solely Mindanaon battle cry became a national issue.

Just this week, the Technical Assistance for the Development of Rural and Urban Poor (TACDRUP) hosted a forum on federalism and Charter change.

Although the fate of federalism is now in the hands of Congress, we want to make it clear that only a federal-parliamentary form of government can cure the country of its many ills.

Mindanao federalists deeply believe that federal-parliamentary is not only the most viable and a part of the lasting answer to the Mindanao problem, but also the system of government most suited for the Philippines in the 21st century.

A federal Philippines would do away with the concentration of power in the hands of a single national center.

A federal system will give the nation that chance, because only a federal system can give real power to regional governments.

The Lumad peoples have persistently expressed their preference for self-determination, having seen that their absorption into the unitary political system has threatened their existence and the integrity of their distinct cultures.

The Bangsamoro people have their own distinct identity that must be respected.

With the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the central government has allowed, albeit grudgingly, a departure from having a central authority.

The passage of the Local Government Code in 1991 further chipped away at the powers of the central authority.

The local government units—from the regions to the barangays—were able to exercise greater self-determination.

From an economic perspective, the expected positive effect of federalism on Mindanao is the passage of more sustainable socioeconomic reforms.

Through a federal system, regional accountabilities would create tailor-made programs for smaller territories that are more responsive to their constituencies, particularly the infrastructure, employment/jobs creation, health, education, and various other human development programs.

The environment will allow an economy where small and micro businesses will become robust; where investments laws are designed to meet the needs of the state.

The traders will have more access to government services and there will be fewer layers of bureaucracy.

A smaller constituency will also make measurement of political performance easier for the voters.

Regional economic and social programs are more directly felt and assessed, empowering the constituents to act more rationally in elections.

In summary, federalism is the one system that may effectively address the problems in Mindanao, and correct the years of neglect by the central government.

This unique island-region that is home to three peoples—Lumads, Moros and Christians—of diverse backgrounds, customs, culture, traditions, and social systems, calls for unity in diversity.

Federalism could be the key that will unlock and unleash the true potentials of Mindanao.

(Joji Ilagan Bian is a strong advocate for Mindanao; chair, Mindanaworld Foundation Inc.; ConCom and Charter change Advocacy Commission member; vice chair of the Mindanao Commission of Women and National Corn Board; chair of the Mindanao TVET; Mindanao Rep, Export Development Council; chair, Joji Ilagan Foundation; Former chair of the Mindanao Business Council.)

Japan lifts ban on RP poultry

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAS LIFTED the 10-month import ban on Philippine poultry, which would enable local firms to corner part of the $700-million annual import requirements of Japan.

Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban said he had been informed by Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Ryuichiro Yamazaki that the Philippines has been allowed to resume its exports of frozen chicken parts and other products starting June 7.

The Philippines voluntarily suspended shipments of poultry products in July 2005 when it detected the presence of low-risk H5 strain.

Although it was not the deadly H59N1 strain that has killed 65 people and infected 250 in Asia, Japan still banned imports due to fears of an outbreak of avian flu.

With the Philippines proving that it was free of the avian flu virus, it has been allowed to resume exports to Japan.

Aside from Japan, the Philippines exports local poultry products to South Korea and some European countries.

Additional shipments of local products were reported to be underway as Philippine agribusiness firms, led by San Miguel Corp. and RFM Swift Foods Inc., are now being pressed to produce more than one million kilos to meet the growing demand for chicken products.

Chicken exports before the import ban in Japan reached 1.6 million kilos, according to the Poultry Exporters Board.

Trial shipments have already been sent to European countries such as Switzerland and Sweden, local exporters said.

According to the Poultry Exporters Board, Philippine chicken products have won new overseas markets, including the United Arab Emirates.

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Japanese firms seek to invest in RP oil, gas exploration projects

By Abigail L. Ho

FOLLOWING A RECENT ENERGY roadshow in Japan, various Japanese firms have expressed interest in investing in energy projects in the Philippines.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said Japanese companies were particularly interested oil and gas exploration and even biofuels.

"We are optimistic that these companies will seriously consider the Philippines as an alternative area for investments now that we are seriously concentrating on reforming our economy," he said yesterday in a statement.

The high prices of oil in the world market, he said, prompted many Japanese firms to consider undertaking oil and gas exploration projects in Asia, including the Philippines.

Some firms, in fact, had even expressed their intent to participate in the Department of Energy's upcoming petroleum contracting round, he said.

They also asked about joint-venture opportunities with the Philippine National Oil Co. for existing oil and gas concessions in the country, he added.

He noted that the country had a high hydrocarbon potential, with northwest and southwest Palawan having proven oil and gas reserves.

Apart from Japanese trading firms, Japanese banks also participated in small-group discussions to find out how they could provide financial support to Japanese firms that would decide to do business in the Philippines.

Oil and gas exploration was not the only area of the energy sector that caught the interest of Japanese investors. Lotilla said at least two Japanese firms were eyeing Philippine coco methyl ester (CME) plants as possible sources of biodiesel for Japan.

PNOC president and chief executive Eduardo Manalac, one of the roadshow delegates, said some companies also asked about ethanol "since most of the cars in Japan run on gasoline."

"With the increasing prices of oil in the world market, Japan is expanding the use of biofuels and are now looking at diversifying its sources all over the world, and the Philippines is one area that they are currently looking at in Asia," Lotilla said.

Squeezing a fortune out of juice packs

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

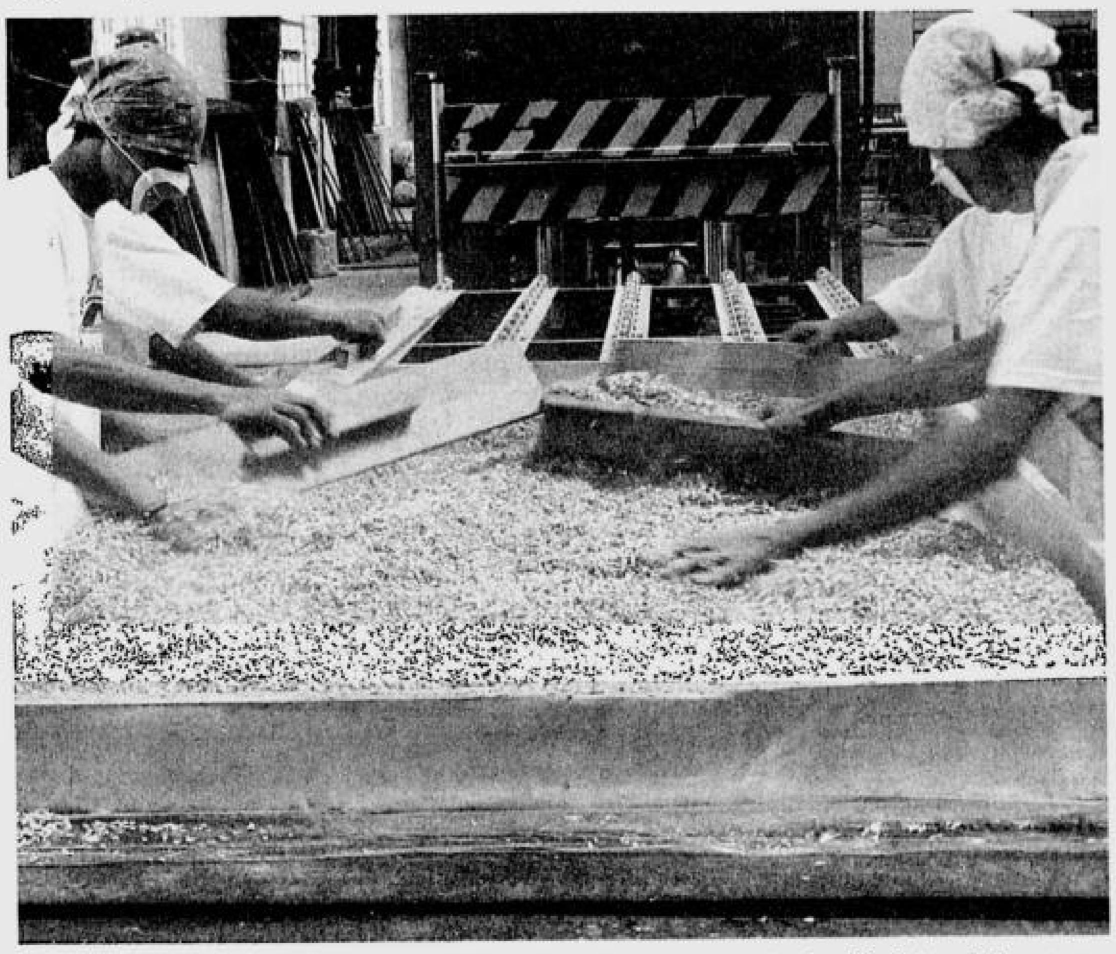
CORPORATE CITIZEN

MOST FILIPINOS MAY NOT know it, but the Tetra Pak milk, juice, oil and sauce cartons that households throw away with the rest of their trash are worth something.

Tetra Pak (Philippines) Inc. managing director Noel Ayre explains that, because Tetra Pak uses top-quality fiber, its patented packaging materials can be broken down and used again to produce other materials, such as sturdy composite boards and paper products.

Tetra Pak is already working with two recycling firms in the country that want to use as much Tetra Pak cartons as possible.

These firms turn recycled Tetra Pak material into paper and boards, which are also used by the Tahanang Walang Hagdan to produce household items, such as picture frames.



GRADUATES of the Don Bosco Street Children Foundation prepare the shredded Tetra Pak cartons for molding.

High end

"The sort of fiber that we use is at the top end so that even if they are recycled, they are still at the high end," Ayre tells the INQUIRER. "Our cartons have high intrinsic value, that's why companies want to use them."

Tetra Pak uses high-quality fiber because its packaging materials are designed to retain the freshness and nutrients of products—with no need for refrigeration—such as milk, cheese, juices, tomato sauce, and even fruits, vegetables and pet food.

"Protects what's good" is Tetra Pak's motto.

Tetra Pak materials, thus, are ideal for recycling. But the problem of recycling firms' in the Philippines is lack of reliable supply.

This is where Tetra Pak in the Philippines wants to come in through its information campaign targeted at households and junk dealers.

Segregate

Junk dealers are of particular interest to Tetra Pak because they are in the best position to collect Tetra Pak cartons, along with other recyclable materials, such as glass and plastic bottles, newspapers and carton boxes.

Ayre explains that because the junk dealers do not know any better, they do not segregate Tetra Pak cartons the same way that they set aside glass and plastic bottles, for instance.

Looking for cartons

This means that the Tetra Pak cartons end up in the same pile as other paper products, so its recycling value is not maximized. It also means less material for the two recycling firms who are willing to pay a good price for the Tetra Pak cartons.

Tetra Pak has then decided to form an environment team in the Philippines and assigned three employees to go on the road and inform as many junk dealers as possible about the value of Tetra Pak and to let them know that there are companies out there looking for these cartons.

The efforts are starting to bear fruit as junk dealers and households are slowly realizing that these cartons are valuable in the recycling industry, and they can earn from them, instead of throwing them away like ordinary trash.

Tetra Pak actually started its recycling program four years ago when it launched its Care and Share program for schools.

The program has reached about 100 private schools and students were encouraged to bring Tetra Pak cartons for recycling.

The students get incentives and the schools win some prizes from Tetra Pak, which the firm gives to a less fortunate partner school, usually in the provinces.

But more than just earning prizes for bringing Tetra Pak containers, the students get to learn about the importance of recycling and environment care from Tetra Pak experts.

Saving the environment

They are also treated to puppet shows that focus on the importance of drinking milk and caring for the environment. Tetra Pak even conducts exhibits featuring recycled items from recycled Tetra Pak packages.

These include plant boxes, pencil containers, model cars, hanging planters, mobiles, bird feeders, puppets and handmade paper.

From schools to households and junk dealers, Ayre says the plan is to expand the recycling program to include barangay units by next year.

"What we would like to see is for every barangay to be involved," Ayre says. "They can help save the environment and earn money at the same time."

ICTSI to turn Japan port into regional hub

Port operator prepares for new China-Japan service routes

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST port management firm plans to expand its operations in Japan and develop the Okinawa port into a regional hub that will service East Asia.

In a statement, International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) said that its Naha International Container Terminal in Okinawa, Japan was eyeing the expanded status with the proposal of a new service route between the western ports of China and the southern ports of Japan.

"As trade between the two Asian economic giants increases, the Naha terminal, ideally located at the center of the East China Sea, is ready to facilitate Chinese cargo bound for Japan, and Japanese cargo bound for China," the company said.

Its operator and manager, Naha International Container Terminal Inc., an affiliate of ICTSI, is developing the port into an alternative hub in the region.

"With its strategic location, the NICT is ideally situated to respond to the rapidly growing trade between mainland Asia, and the rapidly growing regional markets, particularly China and its primary trading partners," ICTSI executive vice president Edgardo Q. Abesamis said.

"We will begin by introducing a new route, that will tranship cargo at the Naha port from the eastern ports of China and southern ports of Japan," he added.

Plans are underway to establish a China-Naha-Kyushu service that will connect eastern Chinese ports like Xiamen, Fuzhou and Wenzhou to Naha.

Vessels carrying Japanese imports from these ports will tranship containers at the Okinawan port. Once in Naha, Chinese lines may also load Japanese cargo bound for China.

In Japan, southern ports like the Kitakyushu port cluster, Fukuoka and Kagoshima will also connect to Naha through vessels carrying containers bound for China. Japanese lines, on the other hand, may pick up Chinese cargo in Naha intended for the Japanese market.

"Our proposed route will improve liner service as this is effectively an all water door-to-door service," Abesamis said. "We would have reduced transit times between Chinese and Kyushu ports which were not served by main line vessels, and reduced inland transport costs once we roll out the new service."

ICTSI said several Chinese shipping lines have already expressed interest in the proposed route. Plans are underway to address cost concerns as well as to introduce competitive tariffs at the Naha port.

The Naha terminal is equipped with two new quay cranes. It has a straight wharf of 600 meters with two berthing positions at a controlling depth of 13 meters. Terminal area is at 21 hectares.

After declaring ICTSI the winning bidder for the privatization of the port in late 2004, the Naha Port Authority (NPA) and ICTSI signed a 10-year concession to manage and operate the terminal.

This is ICTSI's first port venture in East Asia and also marks the first time that such a facility was privatized by the Japanese government, selecting a foreign company as its operator.

PLDT to trim phone service rates by half

By Daxim L. Lucas

MONTHLY RATES FOR RESIDENTIAL phone lines may be slashed by over 50 percent after telecommunications regulators approved a new promo proposed by Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT).

In a letter to the telecommunications giant, the National Telecommunications Commission approved PLDT's new "Economy Plans," which charge a monthly fee of as low as P300 for residential users for the Economy Plan 1 option.

The rate represents a sharp discount over the company's existing standard rate for residential subscribers, which starts at P700 a month.

"[NTC] interposes no objection to the implementation of the new offerings," Commissioner Ronald O. Solis said in a letter to PLDT, specifying only that the service must be offered on an optional or voluntary basis and that the mechanics, features and rates of the promo be published before it is implemented.

For an additional P400 a month, the residential user may also avail himself of a subscriber data line which will give him access to the Internet via the same phone line.

The bundled telephone and Internet service, assuming a P700 a month charge, will also be cheaper than PLDT's existing promo, which offers the same service at over P800 a month.

An Economy Plan 2 package offers residential users a phone line at P488 a month and to business users for P888 a month. Internet access under this scheme is pegged at P200 a month.

The NTC also approved PLDT's petition to levy a toll access feature charge of P5 a call on top of regular toll charges for the domestic or international long distance calls made under the Economy Plans.

The regulator pointed out, however, that the voice access charge was subject to foreign currency adjustments using approved base rates and reference foreign exchange rates, while all quoted rates exclude value-added tax levies from the government.

Finally, the NTC ruled that clients subscribing to the new Economy Plans were barred from enjoying further discounts from the company.

"Customers who avail of the Economy Plans will not be eligible for subscription to the existing P10 per call unlimited PLDT-to-PLDT NDD offer and all other reduced toll packages to be offered in the future," Solis said in his letter.

Senate wants to hike income tax rate to 35%

By Michelle V. Remo

A FLAT INCOME-TAX RATE OF 35 percent for all individuals has been put forward by the Senate committee on ways and means—up from the original proposal of 30 percent.

In a Senate hearing on tax reform bills the other day, committee chair Sen. Ralph Recto said a flat tax covering all individuals would simplify tax administration, and therefore enhance tax compliance by the public.

But the committee decided to adopt a higher tax rate of 35 percent because the 30-percent rate would significantly erode tax collection by the government. The original proposal for a 30-percent flat tax was put forward along with the suggestion that those whose annual income amount to P100,000 or below should be exempted from the income tax.

Estimates by the committee said the government would stand to lose P7 billion in potential tax collection annually under the original proposal. According to the Department of Finance's simulations, the government could lose up to P10 billion.

Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran earlier said the Department of Finance was amenable to the original 30-percent flat tax for individuals. But the agency believed the tax measure should be implemented later rather than sooner, or once the government has resolved its fiscal problems.

Beltran said the 35-percent flat income tax rate for individuals—a proposal which involves income tax exemption for annual incomes of P200,000 or less—would be revenue neutral, or would not result in any foregone revenues.

The finance official said the proposal could even raise revenue for the government because the simplification of the tax system would encourage tax compliance among the people and would make it easier for the Bureau of Internal Revenue to conduct tax audits.

The National Tax Research Center, an attached agency of the DOF tasked with conducting tax-related studies, said imposing a flat tax was a prudent way to improve tax administration. The tax center also noted that countries that shifted to a system of uniform income tax rate experienced growth in revenue collection.

But the NTRC cautioned that a flat tax might elicit complaints from some taxpayers because the proposal runs counter to the principle of progressive taxation. According to the principle, higher income earners must be imposed a higher income tax rate.

But Beltran said the proposed flat tax of 35 percent, with exemption for annual incomes of P200,000 and below, would still be progressive because more low-income earners would actually be exempted from paying the income tax while middle- to high-income ones would be paying a 30-percent tax on their income.

The plan to impose a uniform income tax rate will be included in the bill that seeks to reform that National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) or the Tax Code, which has been in effect since 1997.

Once enacted into law, the new measure would replace the current income tax system, which imposes various income tax rates depending on an individual's income. Currently, income tax on individuals range from 5 to 32 percent.

Peso nears 53 to $1, closes at 4-month low

From page B1

tervention, the peso recovered some losses.

"The market knows that the BSP might not let the peso break past the 53:$1 psychological level at this time because it might create further panic," one trader said.

In previous months, foreign investors were lured by higher yields in emerging markets given the steady monetary and foreign exchange policies in bigger markets like the United States, China and Japan.

In the past, for instance, the United States had clearly stated it would curb its current account deficit and lure Asia's excess funds while dealing with inflation at the same time. Japan, on the other hand, had indicated it would stick to a quantitative easing of monetary policy that allowed some uptick in inflation, while China said it would not deviate too much from the prevailing exchange rate.

But with uncertainties over these policies emerging, global investors have become more risk-averse and started to move funds away from emerging markets.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. earlier said interest rates based on treasury bills had fallen too low and must bottom out to make peso assets more attractive.

The Asian Development Bank had said in an earlier study that a flu pandemic could be substantially more damaging in both human and economic terms than the SARS.

On the demand side, a pandemic is seen affecting consumer confidence and changing consumption and social patterns, aside from dampening investor confidence. On the supply side, a pandemic is also seen to affect the availability of labor, as illness will force many workers to stay home, and affect the livestock sector negatively.

"Governments will have to deal with an uncertain policy environment as they respond to the public health emergency and economic dislocation," the ADB said.

"Markets have a tendency to overreact, which could exacerbate the economic impact," the ADB added.

Message of Appreciation

The bereaved husband **Gilbert Olega**; children **William, Joshua, Jason** and **Darius**; parents **Engr. Lolito Giron** and **Judith Giron**; brothers **Arnold** and **Richard**; relatives, friends and loved ones of

MA. JULIEBETH GIRON-OLEGA

who passed away last April 21, 2006 wish to convey their deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who offered prayers and support in their hour of bereavement.

Friends and relatives are invited to attend the 40th day of special prayer on May 28, 2006, 3:00 p.m. at the

Giron Residence
5 Doña Trinidad Street
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Sucat, Parañaque, Metro Manila

**TATAY, we love you very much.
So Sadly Missed and Lovingly Remembered
on his Tenth Death Anniversary**

AGUSTIN YDEM DE JESUS

Lucena City
Best Father, Greatest Grandfather
August 22, 1907 – May 25, 1996

His Children: **LILIA & BENHUR, CLODUALDO & CAROLINA, MA. TERESA & RICARDO**; grandchildren: **NINGNING & ALFRED, CLAUDE & OLIVE, TOTI, OLIVER & LORALIE**; and **FLORIO**; great grandchildren: **MICKEY & MARTY**; and **REDD**; friends & relatives request to pray for the eternal repose of his soul. Masses will be offered at Our Lady of Fatima Parish Church at Cordillera St., Q.C., Holy Redeemer Church at 6:00 A.M. and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Daly City, CA, U.S.A.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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HERMOGENES G. MANGASING

(Go Lian Huat)

Peacefully joined our Heavenly Father on May 22, 2006 at the age of 77.

His loving wife **Conchita**; children: **Henry**, **Peter** and **Claudine**, **Victor** (†), **Christine** and **Michael**; grandchildren **Patrick** and **Cian**, **Miecah** and **Maibell**, request for your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies at the Imperial Chapel, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Mass of the Resurrection will be on Thursday, June 01, 2006, 09:00 a.m. at the Imperial Chapel, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta and cremation will follow at 12:00 noon at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Baesa Road, Caloocan City.

Message of Thanks

The family: husband Nilo; daughter Shey;
mother Visitacion;
sister and brothers Rowena, Benjie, Oscar
of the late

Priscilla Madamba Tam

**who joined her Creator on
April 16, 2006**

wish to convey their heartfelt gratitude to all those who paid their last respects, offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers, messages of sympathy and Novena Masses and who in various ways gave comfort to the family.

Mortuary and Crematory at The Heritage Park

Hermogenes S. Villanueva

Devoted husband, Loving father, Doting grandfather

Peacefully joined our Lord on May 23, 2006 at the age of 76.

His wife Ofelia; children Rita & Rudy; Nonie & Mila; Malou & Marcelo; Victoria & Luisa; Beatriz; Luisa & Franco; Omer & Tess; and Agnes & Chris; grandchildren Nicole, Denise & Girard, Rowen, Natasha, Louise, Jose-Mari, Samantha, Carlos Miguel, Gabriella; great grandchild Kubling-malay; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Inc., Araneta Avenue, Q.C.

Interment will be on 28 May 2006 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City after the Funeral Mass.

CLASSIFIEDS

NFA's transfer will generate savings for the government

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY ADMINISTRATOR Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr. said NFA's scheduled transfer to the Sugar Regulatory Administration building will generate substantial cost savings aside from placing the agency within the vicinity of other offices attached to the Department of Agriculture.

This is in line with the government's cost-saving measures for which the NFA has also been cited for its judicious compliance to the government's energy management program.

As the NFA is a member of the DA family, Tan said the agency's transfer to the SRA building along North Ave. in Quezon City will also facilitate coordination with the DA.

The NFA Central Office has been occupying a rented private building along E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue in Quezon City for the past 26 years. Because the SRA building is also a government property, the NFA's transfer would also mean much lower rental fees.

Two departments of the NFA, namely Technical Services and the Technology Resource and Development had earlier been transferred to the agency's own building along Visayas Avenue which also houses a warehouse and the NFA-CO motorpool.

The relocation of the entire NFA Central Office at the SRA, approximately half a kilometer away from the agency's motorpool, will also mean savings in terms of fuel, vehicle maintenance and man-hours which would redound to better services for the agency's stakeholders and the public, Tan said.

About 1,500 employees comprise the NFA central office to be transferred to the SRA building. For further information on the story, the public may send in text messages to 0917-6210927.

CLASSIFIEDS

PORO POINT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
A Subsidiary of Bases Conversion Development Authority

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PORO POINT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (PPMC), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract	CONSTRUCTION OF FENCE FOR THE SAN FERNANDO AIRPORT RUNWAY STRIP (WESTERN PORTION)
Location	San Fernando Airport, Poro Point Special Economic and Freeport Zone, Canaoay City of San Fernando, La Union
Brief Description	Construction of Fence
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Four Million Nine Hundred Ninety Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Eight Pesos and Sixty Five Centavos (P4,990,588.65)
Contract Duration	One Hundred Twenty Calendar Days (120)

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC shall use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC shall conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

	BAC Activities	Schedule
1.	Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	June 7 & 8, 2006
2.	Issuance of Eligibility Form	June 7 & 8, 2006
3.	Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	June 14, 2006
4.	Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	June 20, 2006
5.	Issuance of Bid Documents	June 22, 2006
6.	Pre-bid Conference	June 26, 2006
7.	Receipt and Opening of Bids	July 10, 2006

The BAC shall issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at PPMC Administration Building, PPSEFZ, Poro, City of San Fernando, and upon their submission of LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) to the PPMC Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P2,500.00) to the PPMC Cashier.

The PPMC assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ATTY. ANTHONY C. MANGUIAT
BAC Chairman

(PDI - May 25 & June 1, 2006)

SANYO DENKI *PHILIPPINES, INC.*
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DESIGN MANAGERS (2)

for its newly established Design Division. The incumbent of this position will be in charge of the management and administration of this Division. He/she should have extensive knowledge on the conceptualization, designing, implementing and testing of different models of Fan Motors as prescribed by our customers. Accordingly, the candidate is expected to know very well all the processes involving the production of a Fan Motor. He/she must also have previous hands on experience in handling at least five people in a similar managerial capacity. A minimum of 10 years experience in a manufacturing company is required.

QA SERVO MANAGER (1)

Must have at least 10 years of extensive knowledge in the production and quality processes of Servo Motors. The job encompasses not only incoming quality inspection of raw materials but including quality assurance of Servo finished products. The incumbent must also be knowledgeable in the operation of different quality-testing machines and equipments and familiar with its maintenance as well.

All applicants for the above positions should be able to speak, read and write Nihongo.

Interested applicants should send their resume with 2x2 picture and other credentials to:

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Subic Bay Freepot Zone**

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **Alex H. Verchez** and **Wilma G. Herrera** were elected as members of the Board of Directors of **TEEKAY SHIPPING PHILIPPINES, INC.** effective 26 April 2006.

TEEKAY SHIPPING PHILIPPINES, INC.

**In compliance with POEA Requirement
POEA-029-SB-042605-R**

(PDI--May 25, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
Industry & Investment Building
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E-mail OSAC@boi.gov.ph Homepage: http://www.boi.gov.ph
Cable address: INVESTBOARD P.O. Box 1872 Makati

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **PSC DIVERSIFIED FRUITS, INC.** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New Producer of Fresh Fruits and Operator of Vapor Heat Treatment Facility Project** on a **Non-Pioneer Status** with capacity of **7,700 MT per year** with project/plant site located at **AJMR Port Complex, Km. 20, Tibungco, Davao City.**

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI–May 25, 2006)

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Lida, Inc. film showing "5 Children & It" scheduled to be shown on May 30, 2006, 7:00 p.m. at Greenbelt I Cinema II, Makati City is postponed due to lack of donors and benefactors. Schedule for further announcement.

(PDI - May 25, 2006)

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More Classified Ads on pages A7, A12 & B2.

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BUSINESS

IMF urges RP to carry out more reforms

Malls thrive as diaspora dollars roll in

JOSIEBETH CRUZ IS A SELF-CONfessed mall rat.

Since returning to the Philippines in March after a year working as a bartender on a luxury cruise liner, she has visited SM Megamall in Manila—which was the country's biggest before Mall of Asia opened on Sunday—almost every day.

"It's so convenient," said the 32-year-old widow and mother of two. "You'll find everything you need. We spend almost the whole day in the mall."

Cruz is one of around 8.5 million Filipinos—a tenth of the country's population—who work abroad for better pay.

A WOMAN shops for shoes in one of the malls in Manila. Roughly 8.5 million Filipinos work abroad and the money they send fuels consumption that, in turn, drives more than 70 percent of GDP.

REUTERS

The money they send and spend back home fuels consumption that, in turn, drives more than 70 percent of gross domestic product. That ratio is even higher than in the United States, where private consumption accounts for two-thirds of GDP.

The disposable income of most overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) is one reason why big malls proliferate despite tepid economic growth that averaged about 4.6 percent in 2000-2005.

Mall of Asia eclipsed SM Megamall as the country's largest shopping center, opening to a huge weekend crowd even as the country's economic managers fret about the impact of higher taxes and oil prices on consumer spending and GDP growth.

The new mall, built for P6.5 billion ($124 million) by SM Prime Holdings Inc., the group that also runs SM Megamall, has a floor area of 386,000 square meters (4.15 million sq. ft.)—one of Asia's largest and almost as big as Vatican City.

The SM group is optimistic the new mall will do as well as its 24 others—helped in part by shoppers such as Josiebeth Cruz.

SM Prime's malls—not counting Mall of Asia and SM City Clark which opened only this month—attract an average 1.7 million people on any weekday, with traffic doubling at weekends as families spend time in shopping centers due to a relative lack of leisure facilities such as parks and museums.

As malls spread, there is a noticeable shift in lifestyle.

"People before would probably go to Megamall ... once a week," said Leo Venezuela, an analyst at ATR Kim-Eng Securities. "Now that malls are a lot closer, they get to go more often."

The Philippines is one of the world's top recipients of remittances after China, India and Mexico.

With an average household of three children, the country's emigre labor force feeds and clothes about 34 million people, including their partners, or 40 percent of the entire population.

Including extended families, the number of people depending on remitted money easily rises to more than 50 percent of the population.

That presents a goldmine for mall operators and retailers.

Official remittances hit a record $10.7 billion in 2005, equal to more than 10 percent of GDP. Double-digit growth was sustained in the first three months of 2006, with remittances in March alone hitting an eight-year high.

The central bank expects official remittances of $11.8 billion this year, a 10 percent rise from last year as Filipinos continue to go abroad to work as nurses, maids, seafarers, musicians, accountants, technology professionals and laborers. *Reuters*

Gov't asked to sustain gains, avoid heavy spending during good times

By Doris C. Dumlao

AN INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND team has urged the Philippine government to sustain fiscal gains by pursuing more high-quality reforms and avoiding heavy spending during good times.

In a recent report released ahead of the next onsite country review, the IMF staff proposed five specific measures to follow up on the country's gains brought on by fiscal consolidation:

- Enhance the revenue system even after the value added tax reform by broadening the tax base and rationalizing income tax incentives;
- Ensure that past revenue gains are not eroded over time, by indexing excises to inflation and revising the level of excises in line with revenue needs and other public policy objectives;
- Strengthen tax administration through improved taxpayer registration, audit strategies, return processing, and debt collection techniques;
- Ensure long-term sustainability of the pension system by conducting regular actuarial reviews and adjusting benefits and contributions in line with the long-term solvency of the system; and,
- Rebalance the composition of public spending away from statutory outlays to ensure adequate financing of infrastructure and maintenance spending.

The IMF advocated spending cuts in politically sensitive expenditure categories, such as wages, pensions, and subsidies. But it noted that these cuts cuts would "require strong political will and public backing, signaling a sound commitment to fiscal consolidation."

It added that the deficits of the government-owned and -controlled corporations must be contained to ensure that all subsectors of the public sector would contribute to the adjustment effort.

"Procyclical fiscal policies should be avoided, whenever feasible," the IMF paper said. "Such policies may unfortunately become inevitable during economic downturns due to the need to preserve the sustainability of public finances—especially in countries like the Philippines that face serious vulnerabilities stemming from high debt burden and large gross financing requirement.

"In addition, sharp spending increases in good times can exacerbate economic volatility and damage fiscal sustainability over the longer run and therefore should be avoided. In this regard, the cautious spending stance in recent years bodes well for making the adjustment more durable, although expenditure composition can be improved."

The report also backed "durable" reforms on the revenue side, such as introducing new taxes and expanding the base of existing taxes through legislative amendments that are more difficult to reverse than administrative or executive orders.

In contrast, the IMF warned that "procyclical fiscal policies that encourage exuberant spending in good times may make it difficult to undo the deficits and debt built up during economic downturns."

For instance, the paper said, the deterioration in the Philippines' underlying fiscal position happened even before the widely blamed 1997 Asian crisis, noting that fiscal policy was loosened from 1995 and that, during the crisis, fiscal policy was procyclical.

Citing a recent study of emerging market economies, the IMF paper said in addition to cuts in wasteful spending, durable revenue mobilization and robust capital spending were also important components of a sustainable fiscal consolidation.

"Procyclical fiscal policy exacerbates economic fluctuations, with adverse consequences for savings, investment, economic growth, and welfare," according to the IMF paper. "It also suggests that a stronger procyclical bias in the upturn may result in a deteriorating fiscal position over time, since deficits and debt built up during bad times are, in general, not offset during good times."

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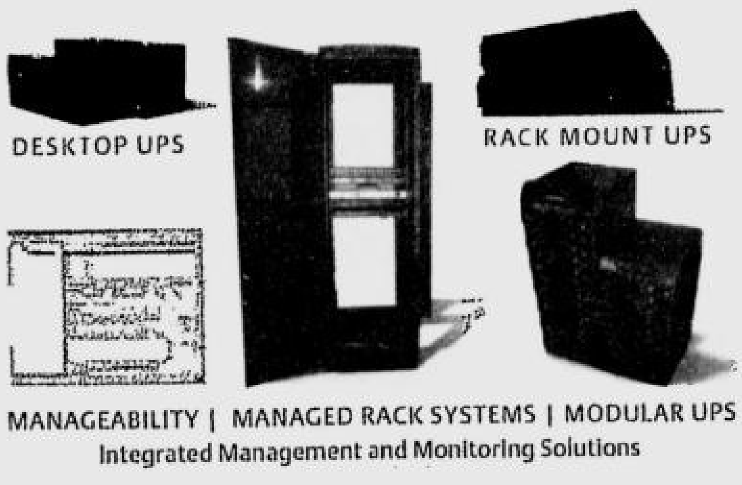

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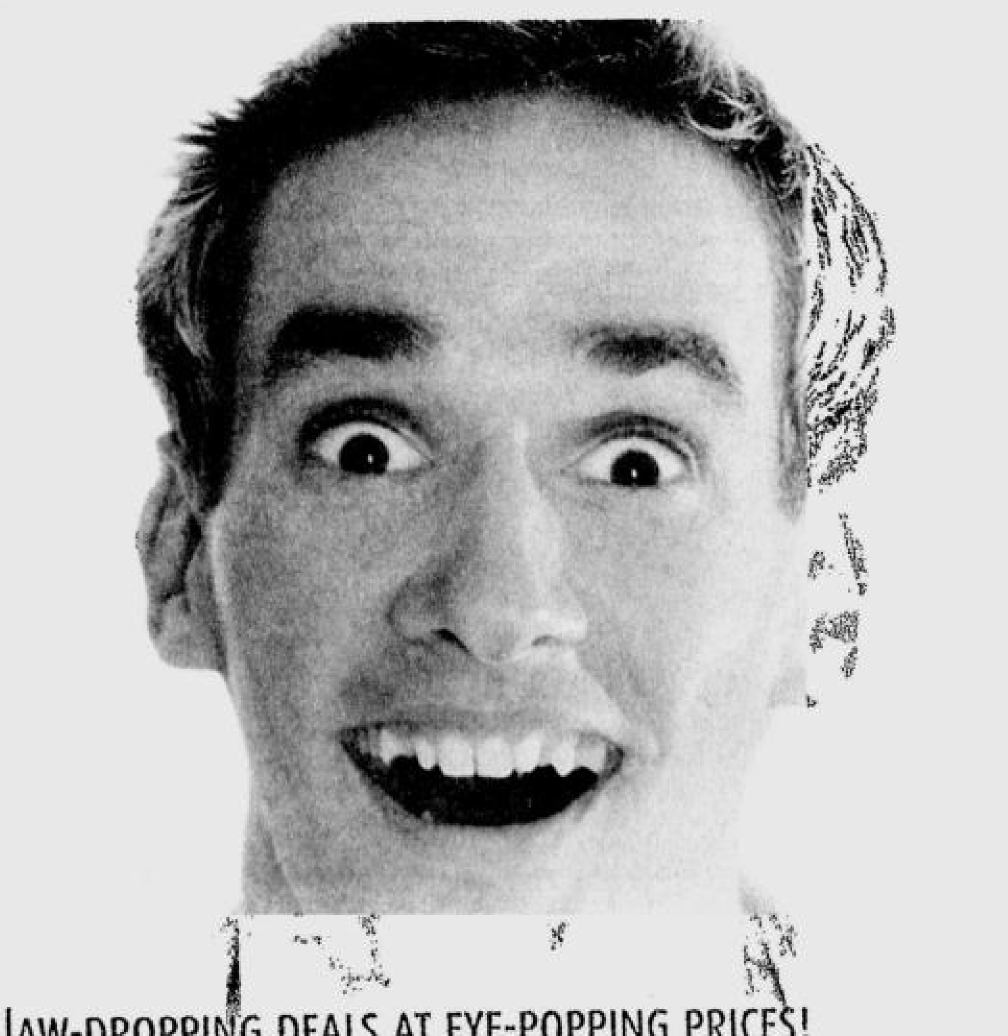

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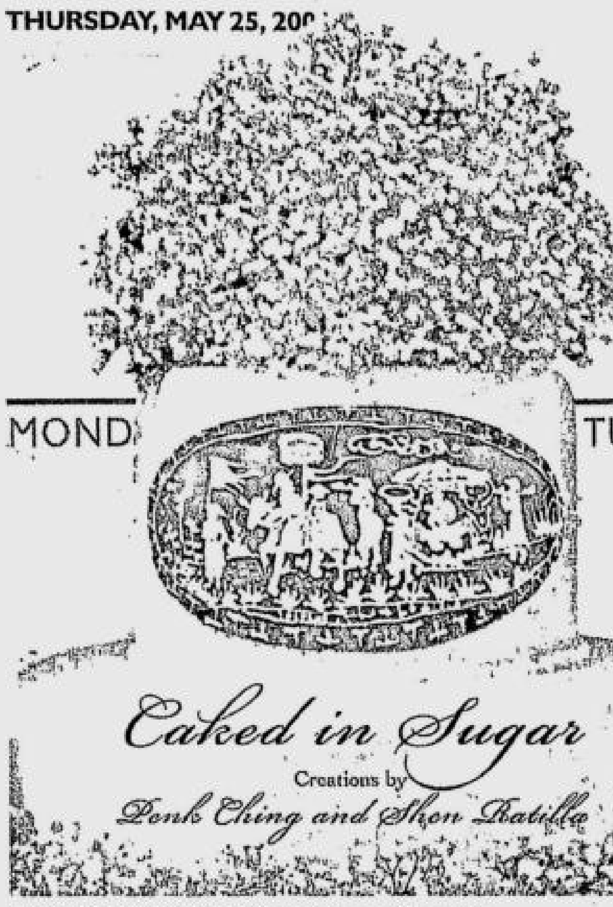


A VIETNAMESE wedding scene on this cake

SISTERS Shen Ratilla and Penk Ching of Pastry Bin

Dazzling sugarcraft and show cakes in a book

Pastry Bin's sisters act comes up with 'Caked in Sugar' containing choice creations

By Micky Fenix

WHEN PENK CHING SAID she made a wedding cake with each layer shaped like a pillow, it was harder for me to imagine it than for her to make it.

She said to know how pillows looked when stacked on top of each other, she did exactly that with the throw pillows in her house. Proof of it was shown to me on a page of a book and it seemed the most amazing baking feat ever.

And she sort of made light of the effort by saying, "It's only sugar."

"Caked in Sugar" contains the choice creations of Ching and her sister Shen Ratilla. They comprise the baking team of Pastry Bin, a company now known for its imaginative show cakes.

Wedding cakes are mostly what you hear of their work. There's the life-size grand piano cake for the wedding of Gerard Salonga, for instance. They made a smaller version for the book only because the bigger one wouldn't fit in the photographer's studio door.

Detailed

And the attention to detail included a music piece, the score of the "Wedding March."

Yes, they recreated the cakes to make sure of the even photo quality needed for a coffee-table book. But not all. Actual wedding pictures of recent nuptials at Malacañang (one Estrada and two Arroyos) were used, with each bride and groom about to cut their respective cakes.

While known today for those huge center-of-attraction cakes, it was the relatively simple wedding cake of Fernando and Kitkat Zobel that called attention to the sisters' abilities.

The simple three-tiered piece with the design on the fondant (icing) depicting details of the bride's gown was deemed not grand enough by the wedding planner. But the bride wanted it that way and the Pastry Bin sisters agreed. The only luxurious touches were strands of pearls flowing down.

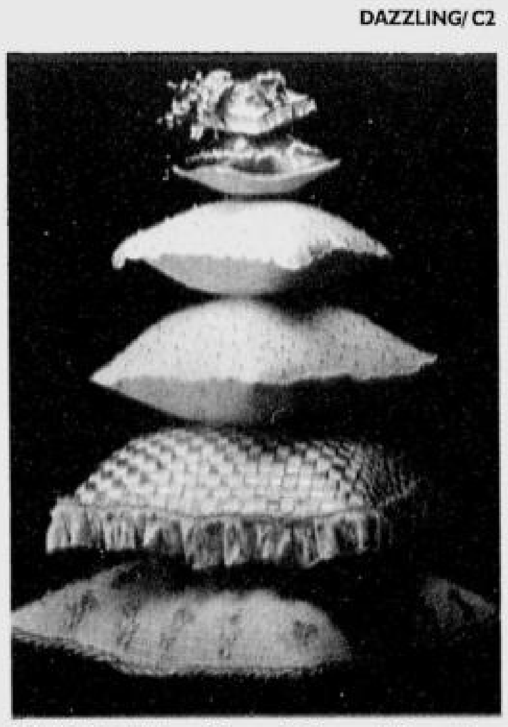
When asked if they were real, Ching repeated, "It's only sugar."

The book preserves in pictures the work the sisters have done. Ching clarified that they never intended to teach technique. What was important was the process—from idea to execution. And each cake says that but in the words of the clients.

It was a laborious task tracing the clients from years ago but, in the end, it was gratifying for the sisters to know they still remembered their cake designs. And so the reader learns why the lampshade is needed or why the tea set is used instead of the usual décor.

The book cover, for example, depicts a Vietnamese wedding scene in deep red that's set off by a white cake and with fresh greenish flowers adorning the top. Ching explained that it was for a Filipino couple who worked

DAZZLING/ C2



LAYERS of pillows formed this wedding cake.

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P4,000 - JUN 5 - 6 - Learn 10 diff. kinds of icing flowers, figure piping. Bake & decorate your basket weave cake using boiled icing.
P2,750 - JUN 7 - Bake & decorate your own character birthday cake using star tips, simple borders & icing flowers
P4,500 - JUN 8 - 9 - Wedding cake assembly: Bake & decorate your own 2 tiered wedding cake using fancy borders, scrolls, strings & icing flowers. NEXT SCHED: JUL 3 - 7
2. JUN 10, 17 & 24 // 8:00AM - 12:00NN - SUGAR FREE BAKING FOR DIABETIC
P3,000 - JUN 10 - Flaky (kaliskis) Empanada, Coffee Cheese Cake, Chocolate Nut Pie, Pineapple Flower Cake, Lemonpie. NEXT SCHED: JUL 8
P3,000 - JUN 17 - Banana, Apple Almond, Bars, Carrot Cake, Choco Nut Cake, Whole Wheat Bread, Raisin Bread NEXT SCHED: JUL 15
P3,000 - JUN 24 - Brownie Supreme, Choco Chiffon, Orange Chiffon, Banana Pecan, Cookies, Spiced Raisin Cookies, Chewy Golden Cookies Baking for Diabetics. NEXT SCHED: JUL 22
3. JUN 12 - 15 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - ADVANCED GUMPASTE & FOREIGN METHOD - (P11,000)
New method on Gumpaste Flowers, Objects, Marzipan, Ribbon Insertion, Finest String Works, Lace Pieces, New Recipe of Fondant Chocolate Fondant NEXT SCHED: JUL 10 - 13
4. JUN 14 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT - (P5,000)
Using Lace Mats, New Rolling Pin W/ Designs Swags & Ribbons, Non-Stick boards w/ Flowers & Veiners & Quilting NEXT SCHED: JUL 12
5. JUN 19 - 23 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - BASIC COMMERCIAL BAKING - (P13,000. For whole course)
P2,600 - JUN 19 - Cakes: plain, mocha, choco, orange chiffon cakes, pound cake, sponge cake, moist choco cake.
P2,600 - JUN 20 - Cakes & Roll: malacañang roll, chocolate roll, brownies, pineapple upside-down, custard cake, mamon.
P2,850 - JUN 21 - Breads: pan de sal, dinner rolls, buns, pan de coco, ensaymada, honey bread & raisin bread
P2,850 - JUN 22 - Pies: Buko pie, custard pie, pineapple pie, apple pie, mango pie, caramel tart.
P2,600 - JUN 23 - Pastries & Cookies: almond tart, San Nicolas cookies, camachile, oatmeal cookies lengua de gato, coconut macaroons NEXT SCHED: JUL 17 - 21
6. JUN 19 - 23 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - COLD PORCELAIN FLOWER COURSES WITH PORCELAIN RECIPE. (P5,000)
(Each set is lesson covered for one day) - a) Sampaguita, Sunflower, Waling-waling; b) Rose, Catlleya, Cymbidium; c) Magnolia, Gerbera, Lilies; d) Open Rose, Hydrangeas, Grapes 'COLD PORCELAIN DOLLS (P10,000) by appointment' NEXT SCHED: JUL 17 - 21
7. JUN 26 - 30 // 8:00AM - 5:30PM - SPECIAL BAKING - (P14,000. For whole course)
Learn to make 25 Kinds of special cakes from around the world. Each cake has a different icing & decoration.
P3,000 - JUN 26 - All Sponge Cakes: Nelusko cake, Black Forest cake, Decadence cake, Fan Torte cake, Fruit Torte cake.
P3,000 - JUN 27 - All Chiffon Cakes: Mango cake, Ube cake, Pistaschio cake, Rocky Road cake, Coffee Crunch cake.
P3,000 - JUN 28 - All Butter Cakes: Butter Rum cake, Carrot cake, Kahlua cake, Moist Chocolate cake, Special Fruit cake.
P3,000 - JUN 29 - Cheesecakes: Blueberry, Mango, Tiramisu, Cookies & Cream, New York Cheesecake.
P3,000 - JUN 30 - Merengues: Sansrival, Solothurn Queens Torte, Braso de Mercedez, Pineapple Merengue Pie
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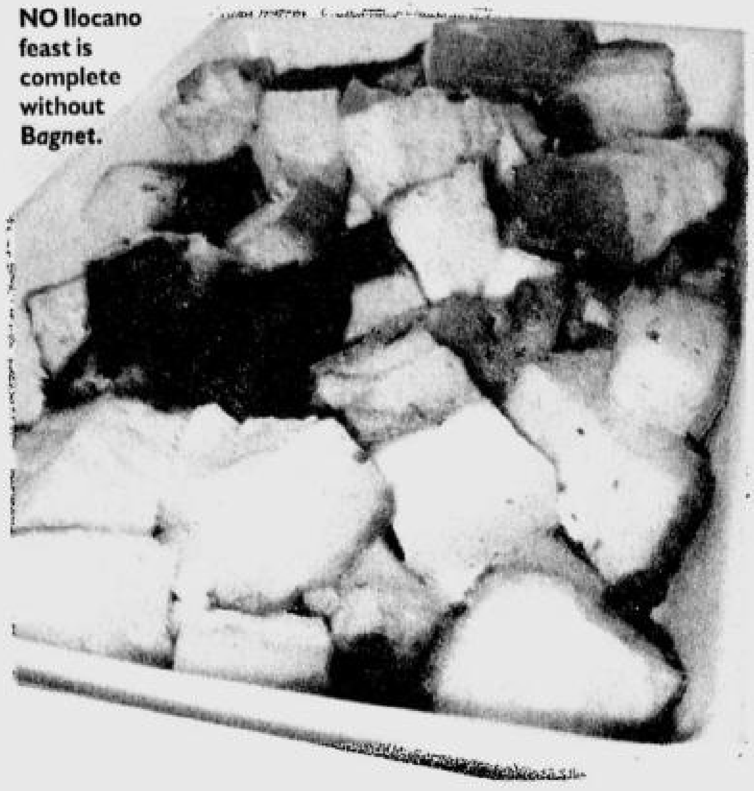

NO Ilocano feast is complete without Bagnet.

A union of flavors, crafts and culture

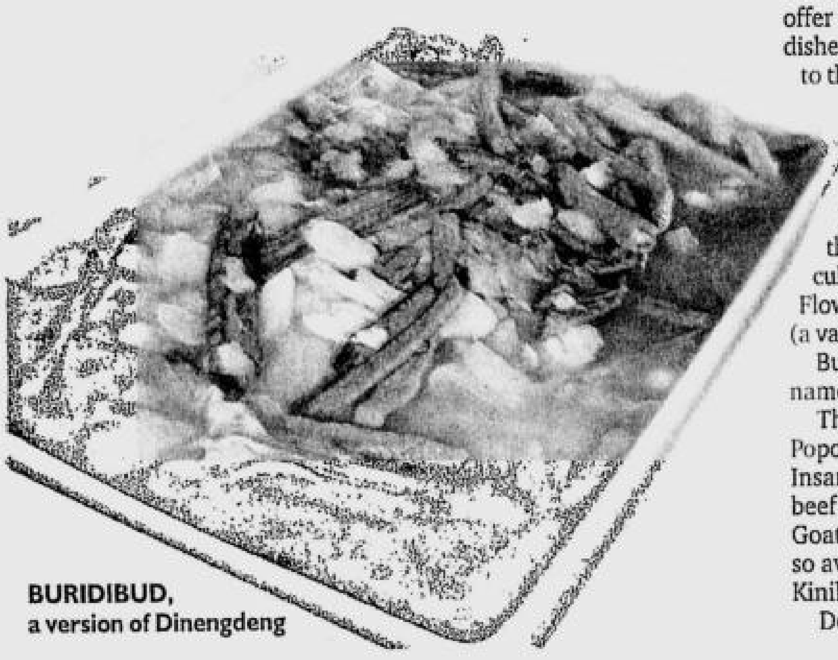
Kinilaw is just one of several dishes using goat meat.

Text and photos by Linda B. Bolido

FILIPINO COOKING SEEMS TO BE finally getting the respect it deserves and the exposure it needs.

Owing in large measure to the month-long celebration of the Filipino Heritage Festival, a joint project of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA), Department of Tourism and Filipino Heritage Festival, Inc., in the past several weeks, regional Philippine cuisine has been showcased in posh venues.

The latest to get the deluxe treatment is La Union cooking at the Renaissance Makati City Hotel. Until May 31, the hotel's coffee shop will offer lunch and dinner buffets that include dishes whipped up by La Union chefs brought to the city especially for the occasion.

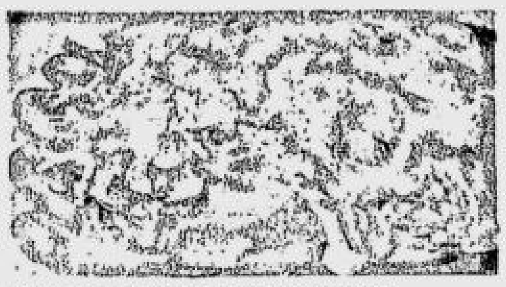

BURIDIBUD, a version of Dinengdeng

Diners who know Ilocano cooking will no doubt find the dishes familiar but also distinctive. Well-known Ilocano delicacies like Bagnet, Pakbet and Longganisa are included, of course, but the La Union menu promises to be quite a culinary adventure with dishes like Katuray Flowers Salad, Burong Kanin and Buridibud (a variation of the vegetable dish Dinengdeng).

Buridibud is only one of the dishes with names guaranteed to pique anyone's interest.

There are also Sinaripsip; Ar-arosep, Popoklo and Gamet Salads; Dinakdakan and Insarabasab (both pork dishes); Sinanglaw (a beef dish); and Dinimdiman (frog with *gata*). Goat meat comes in the familiar Papaitan (also available in beef) and Kaldereta, as well as Kinilaw, among others.

Desserts include Sinam-itan nga Saba, Suman, Kalamay, Ingkiwar, Bibingka that looks like *biko*, Tupig and fresh fruits.


"Green salad" uses *katuray* flowers.

THE SEAWEED *ar-arosep* is known as *lato* elsewhere.

BURONG Kanin may be a completely new experience for many people.

But Flavors of La Union is more than just a food festival.

Held in coordination with the province of La Union, through Gov. Victor F. Ortega, and its capital city of San Fernando, under Mayor Mary Jane C. Ortega, the event also includes a mini exhibition at the hotel lobby of samples of export quality furniture, woven products (a weaver also operates a handloom on display) and silk flowers, as well as products like pure honey, *longganisa, basi, tapuy* and brooms.

The centerpiece of the display booths is a replica of the capital's botanical garden. San Fernando is working to become known as the Botanical Garden City by the year 2010.

Call the Renaissance Makati City Hotel (formerly New World Renaissance Hotel) at 8116888.

Buridibud (Dinengdeng)

Ingredients:

fried or broiled fish
camote
fish *bagoong*
talong
sitaw or papaya
malunggay bunga chopped

Procedure:

Boil water and put fish *bagoong* and let simmer for a while. Then put the boiled mashed *camote* (previously boiled and mashed), together with the *sitaw, talong*, papaya and *bunga ng malunggay*. When vegetables become tender, add the fried or broiled fish and let simmer for a while.

The harmonizing trio of 'sutukil'

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

SUNDAY IN TALISAY. WE MADE SURE that was in our itinerary during the five days spent in Cebu to cover the Filipino food festival at the Mactan Shangri-La.

Talisay on a Sunday is where the city can buy its *lechon* and other roasted food requirements.

Customers can drive by, stop at a stall, transact a purchase through the car window and then drive off. Others get down and go from stall to stall looking for the best bargains. Still others, like our group, buy and eat at one of the stalls offering a table and chairs and a roof that does little to ward off the heat of a noontime sun.

Eating on site means you have to be prepared to look silly. Because of the oppressive heat, we relied on some ice-cold small towels that were used first to refresh faces and hands, then placed on top of our heads, an improvised air-conditioning.

We certainly had our ice-cold drinks. Even if you're not a soft drink fanatic, you'd appreciate a real cold can of soda, with or without the calories.

Talisay has the air of a tabu, a small market where vendors call out to the buyer to try their wares. There were ingredients still to be roasted but there was a lot of food already cooking.

Fish were broiling, cooked pork barbecue were displayed upright on improvised stands. The *molmol* (parrot fish) looked extra tempting, white-fleshed and fat. But one of us decided to have the *mamsa* (*talakitok*, jack).

Best order

It turned out to be the best order because it was fresh and grilled perfectly so that it was moist and milky. We couldn't get enough of it.

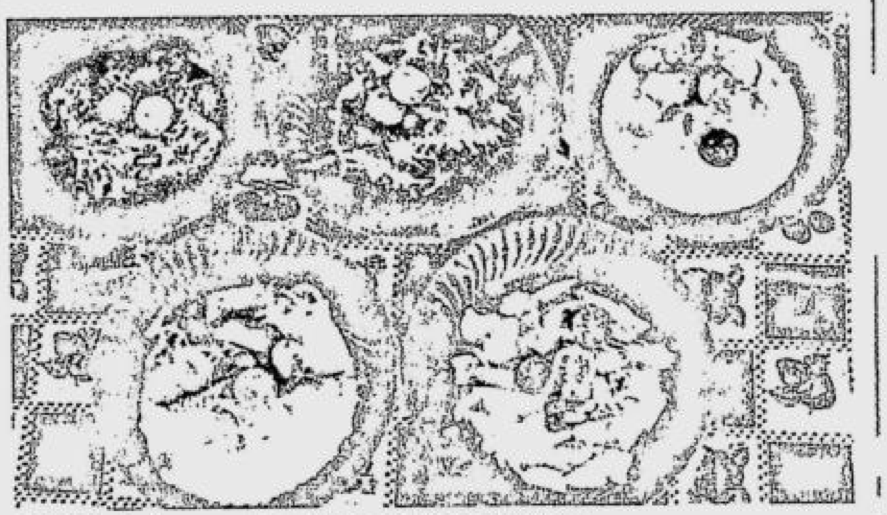
We relied on a resident to choose among the *lechon* vendors. A small native *lechon* was it, chopped depending on the price you want to pay and served with a bottle of vinegar. The vendor told me that the bigger, hence not native, roasted pork was sold according to weight.

One stall specialized in *kinilaw* of several kinds. We looked through each and every plastic container to choose our orders. *Tanguigue* (mackerel) was done the usual way, cubed, marinated in vinegar, squeezed out then bathed with coconut milk and flavored with salt, pepper and chili.

We were curious about the squid but it turned out to be rubbery, perhaps because it was swimming in the *kinilaw* marinade for some time. Then we chose the stall's two kinds of seaweeds, the angel hair *lukot* and the branch-like *guso*.

Kinilaw and roasted food go well together, complementing each other because one is dry and the other, wet; one more salty and the other, more sour. In Mindanao, they've invented a combination of the two, the *sinuglaw*, short for *sinugba* (roast in Visayan) and *kinilaw*.

Inspired


TWO kinds of seaweeds and three versions of kinilaw

Pairing roasted pork and *tanguigue kinilaw* is an inspired creation, which is why two places have claimed it as their own invention—Davao and Cagayan de Oro.

As if the *mamsa, lechon*, two kinds of *kinilaw* and seaweeds were not enough, we had barbecued chicken as well, boiled *camote* that was so sweet and the *puso*, rice cooked within woven coconut frond.

With every bite, we looked at each other then closed our eyes to show how wonderful we were feeling that moment in spite of the heat.

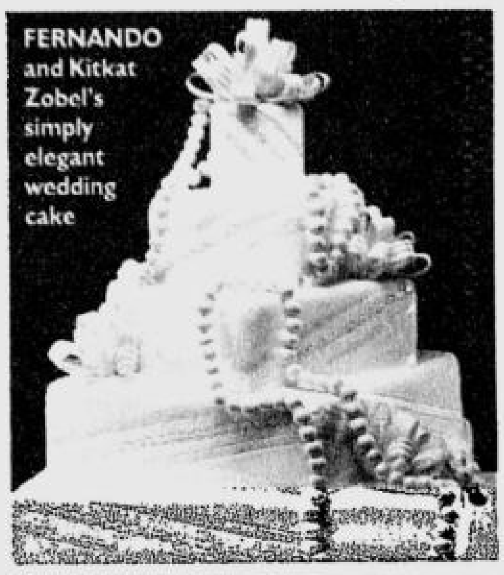
The two kinds of cooking we had in Talisay are part of the *sutokil* combination so prevalent in the Visayas. *Sutokil* stands for *sugba, tola* and *kilaw*, not mixed but served together, a complete meal. The *tola* is the *sinigang* of that area but in Cebu, it goes by the name, *tinowa*.

Sutokil, shortened further to STK, is offered in many roadside eateries in Cebu. The funniest name we encountered was No Problem Restaurant at the Mactan Shrine in Lapu-lapu City.

According to those who have tried it, the owner always says "no problem" to each request. A calling card from the place will either make you laugh or squirm. It lists the owner's name as Rose Inihao and carries this message: Take Eat Easy.

My Cebuana friend introduced me to *tinowa* of *katambak* (*maya-maya*, snapper) head. I still think of it as the best *sinigang* I've ever had even if it's not as sour as we Tagalogs like it. She also taught me to pair it with a dipping sauce of *guinamos* (fermented fish) and *calamansi* spiked with chili.

Two years ago, at the Parr'T Ebelle restaurant in Cebu City (near the SM Mall), *tinowa* of *mulmol* head was sampled. We all looked inside a deep pot at the entrance where the waitresses would ladle the *tinowa* onto containers. We did notice that there were yellow mango bits floating about. Was that their way of emphasizing that the food was distinctly from Cebu?


FERNANDO and Kitkat Zobel's simply elegant wedding cake

Dazzling . . .

From page C1

and met in Vietnam and whose giveaway lacquer set contained the scene. Notice, she said, the jagged lines. The imperfection was something she was proud of because it proved that the design was made by hand.

Mind-boggling

Apart from wedding cakes, those for other occasions were also featured. Perhaps the most spectacular was the Chinese engagement cake with a curlicue lattice-like cover in gold and red. And then the Fabergé egg with its ornate design embedded. It can boggle the mind even more if you know that these are huge creations, sometimes spanning a big table.

To emphasize that sugar creations don't necessarily need cakes, the sisters flexed their artistic muscles and interpreted all the animal symbols in Chinese astrology. Each one seemed like the sisters worked with different media.

The horse looked like a translucent stone and the monkey seemed cut from a reddish coral. The tiger appeared as if painted on a scroll.

Perhaps the most amazing of the creations is the imitation of the Chinese carved ivory ball within a ball within a ball. Ching did it for the competition of the 2001 British Sugarcraft Guild Convention. Her colleagues in the trade told her she would have won had not one of the inner balls been chipped in transit.

Accidents do happen in the business. And you learned how to cope, said Ching. That can mean anticipating disasters by preparing more than the needed decorative pieces. Sometimes it involves some redoing on the spot and under time constraint.

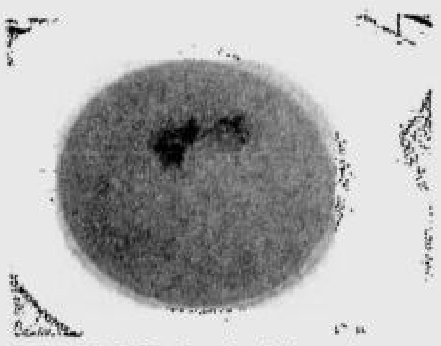
The book shows that the sisters are honed on their craft. Publishing, however, was a totally alien field. Even with that, Penk Ching said her instincts had always been proven right while the book was in production. She chose the cover picture over the objections of the team not only because she thought it was photogenic but also for the practical reason that it left space below for the title of the book.

For Penk Ching and Shen Ratilla, making the book may have been a learning experience but it still was an ordeal. "It's easier to do a cake than a book," Ching declared.

And now that it's done, a grand launch that includes a show and an exhibit of cakes will be held on May 31 at the Peninsula Manila, one of the sponsors together with Swarovski (considering how much crystals are used in cakes nowadays) and the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank.

"Caked in Sugar" will be available in bookstores starting June 1.

Italian summer in Metro Manila


POMODORO, Segafredo's version of tomato soup

BEEF Carpaccio, Salmon Carpaccio, Insalata Fruilana, and Mozzarella, Basil and Tomato as Italian starters

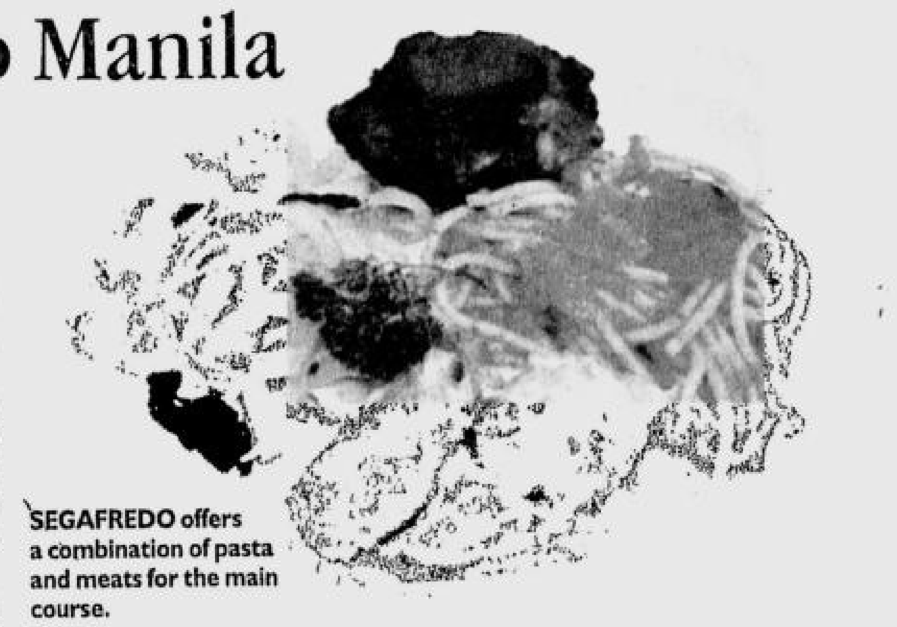
Text and photos by Scott James H. Roxas

ITALIAN SUMMER IS IN THE METRO, thanks to Segafredo Zanetti.

For the whole month of May, Segafredo celebrates "Ciao! Italian Summer" with cooling concoctions and food to satisfy any craving.

The launching event of the restaurant's summer special was as refreshing as the food, with al fresco dining and fun games. Italian food enthusiasts had a grand time playing "coffee-based" games and chomping down on the chef's gastronomic creations.

Customers can have a taste of Italian summer while savoring an array of flavors at Segafredo's outdoor dining area. Cooling off on a hot day is no problemo with coolers, including cold espresso blends, to quench the thirst and food to satisfy even the picky eater.


SEGAFREDO offers a combination of pasta and meats for the main course.

They can try Beef Carpaccio or Salmon Carpaccio as appetizer, and follow it up with a light soup like Pomodoro or Zuppa di Vongole. For salads, there's Clams and Greens, Mozzarella, Basil and Tomato, and Insalata Fruilana.

But what's Italian dining without pasta and pizza? Perhaps Aglio Oglio and Margherita pizza (mozzarella and oregano) will fit the bill. For the main course, Segafredo offers Osso Buco with pasta and Pollo Alla Cacciatore, among others.

These Italian dishes can be enjoyed with a glass of Trebbiano d'Abruzzo or Citra Ortense. The European dining experience can be capped with a cool burst of flavor, *gelato*, available in such varieties as Pistacchio and Ciok Nut.

As a special treat, Segafredo gives customers a 20-percent discount on weekend lunches until July 30.

Segafredo Zanetti is at Greenbelt 2, Makati, and The Podium. Call the Greenbelt branch at 7574058 and The Podium at 6333421.

LE TOQUE Blanche's Othmar Frei and J Gamboa, as well as Anthony de Leon of HRA Baguio, with the participants in the first two-week intensive culinary program at the International School for Culinary Arts and Hotel Management. The trainees will pass on what they learned to students in their respective hometowns.

Willy Wonka ought to be here

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

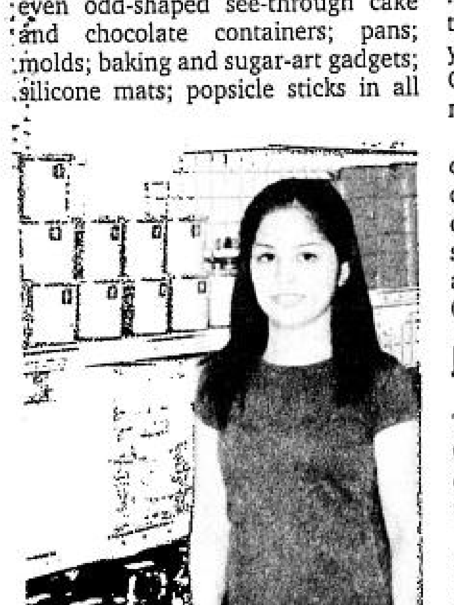
NOTHING COULD BE MORE wonderful than people who turn their love for craft into a business and do so exceptionally well. This is the case with April Te Seng, a baker turned entrepreneur.

Some two years ago, she walked into my class and brought a business card. She told me she was about to open a baking supplies store and I gave her advice some time back. Perhaps I answered one of her questions through Kitchen Rescue.

But due to memory loss, mine of course, I forgot about the incident. All I remember is that I would call her to ask if she had whatever it was that I needed at the moment and somehow, she always did!

Our transactions were always limited to telephone conversations, her staff delivering my orders, until one fine day about two weeks ago, when I needed 70-percent bitter chocolate. To make sure I got what I wanted, I passed by her store and, to my surprise, everything conceivable was there, the only one absent was Willy Wonka!

Sweetcraft is a baker and confectionery artist's paradise. It has everything—the widest selection of chocolates, imported and local, in all variants; packaging materials, boxes, even odd-shaped see-through cake and chocolate containers; pans; molds; baking and sugar-art gadgets; silicone mats; popsicle sticks in all colors; regular, as well as oil-based, food coloring; dried fruits and nuts; sugar and gum-paste flowers.



APRIL Te Seng, baker turned entrepreneur

Anything that baking and chocolate or sugar craft require—name it, they have it. And if they don't, she will source them for you. She even has artists on commission to do beautiful cakes and cup cakes for those who are in search of party giveaways.

For all chocolate fountain victims, this is the perfect place to get chocolate couverture be it bittersweet, milk or white. Just melt and pour away! And please do not add shortening or oil as some manufacturers dictate in their manuals.

Using the perfect chocolate means you would not have to fret over uneven chocolate flow, of course, for as long as you have the right quantity of chocolate for the size of your fountain, which is crucial as well.

Sweetcraft is a must-visit place. Not only will you spend hours unable to decide which or what to buy but you will get your every peso's worth! Compared to other places, they are mighty reasonable.

I could only compare it to specialty confectionery stores in America, so clean and well laid out, absolutely no clutter... a place that allows you to stay on and buy more than what you actually came for. Call 5321595 or 0920-9326919

Job well done

I would like to congratulate Le Toque Blanche's Othmar Frei and J Gamboa, as well as Anthony de Leon of HRA Baguio, for the fantastic work they did with our scholars.

The first batch of 10 are educators from Region 1, all of whom are tasked to pass on what they learned from a two-week intensive culinary program at the International School for Culinary Arts and Hotel Management, to their students in their respective hometowns.

Next batch will be from Cebu and the rest of the Visayas.

To all concerned, the more Chef Tables you attend, the more scholars we'll have. So, support the cause! See you all on World Cup Night!

Shrimps

The perfect *pulutan*... Crispy Shrimps from Aklan! Fair warning though, a kilo might not be enough for one person. For bulk orders, call or text 0918-2390038; for smaller orders, call Gari at 0920-9082969.

Birthday cake

My one and only daughter will celebrate her seventh birthday soon. We plan to give her a small and simple intimate party with just the family. I want to give her a nice birthday cake. I've been ordering for the longest time from .... We all love their caramel cake but their designs are limited. [My daughter] wants a Barbie or butterfly-shaped cake. I know some that make really nice decorations but their cakes aren't so good.

MARINELA

I have been trying to figure out who to recommend. And I sure understand your dilemma, the best decorators come at a price! And understandably so, it is hard work!

I think the usual question is why birthday cakes are never really as good as your favorite caramel or chocolate cake. Truly, it is never quite the baker's fault.

Making your cake pretty, colorful and happy, as a birthday cake should, leaves the baker/decorator very little icing choices. See, not all frostings are of the same consistency. Those that can be piped into intricate designs are just sweet, while the ones that have a lot of flavor could not be piped or, if they could, the color or "stability" of the frosting could be a problem, especially given our climate. Not to mention, of course, that choices for fully decorated cakes are limited, the lighter types could not handle the weight of a full decor.

My son, Diego, and I were recently at Ella Oreta's first birthday party. Her cake was by Sasa Tan, it was nice and the cup cakes are pretty and yummy. Compared to the rest, her prices are reasonable. Call 0917-5339275.

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph.

Product launch in 'dairy farm'

THE NEW BIRCH TREE Evaporated Filled Milk was recently launched at My Little Kitchen (MyLK) restaurant at Greenbelt 3, in Makati City.

The new product by Birch Tree, which produces Birch Tree Cream Milk Powder, comes in 410-ml can, for savings of up to 12 percent per can.

The milk can be used in recipes such as soups, pastas and casseroles. It is also suitable for desserts, smoothies or creamer for coffee.

For the launch, MyLK was transformed into a dairy farm with haystack, milk pails and diorama of cows. Guests were invited to participate in different parlor games.

At the end of the lunch, guests made their own *halo-halo* for dessert.

Birch Tree Evaporated Filled Milk is available in leading supermarkets in Metro Manila like Robinsons, Puregold, The Landmark, South Supermarkets, Makro and Ever Supermarkets. Call 6360943 or fax 6350516. *Honey Lou F. Lastra*

HENY SISON
CULINARY SCHOOL

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

June 2 & 9 - CALIFORNIA RAISIN Filipino Recipes Workshops

June 3(Saturday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A)**THAI COOKING I by: Chef Dino Guingona**, a graduate of California Culinary Academy and at the Thai Cooking School in Chiangmai. **Recipes:** Tum Yam Koong, Khao Pad Koong (Shrimp Fried Rice), Nam Phrik Kaeng (green Curry Paste), Kaeng Kheo Wan Kai (Green Chicken Curry), Mee-Krop (Crispy Fried Noodles), Hor Moak (Steamed Curry). **P1,500**

June 5-6(Monday -Tuesday)9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **CAKE DECORATING COURSE I by: Heny Sison.** "Learn the basics of cake decorating: icing, color, star, shell, dots, outline and scallop borders; the rose, figure piping: clowns & booties. Each student will bake & decorate a character birthday cake. **Full participation. P4,000**

June 5(Monday)9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon(classroom B) **DIMSUM I by: Chef Katherine Sion**, restaurateur (Ding Hao & Fat Kat restaurant), caterer and an expert in Chinese cuisine. " Congee, Siomai, Dumpling, Chicken Feet, Fried Shrimp Ball and Buchi. **P1,700**

June 5(Monday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS! EASY FAST-FOOD RECIPE 1 by: Chef Katherine Sion.** "Sweet and Sour Pork, Fried Crispy Chicken, Pinsec Frito, Beef Pares, Beef Curry, Kangkong with Bagoong. **P2,000**

June 6(Tuesday)9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! BARBECUE, GRILL AND ROAST WORKSHOP W/DIPS AND SAUCES PART 3 by: Chef Sam de Leoz**, Food Consultant, Stylist, Photographer, Caterer, Food demonstrator and Culinary Competition Events Consultant specializing in Basic & Classical Cookery; International & Asian Cuisine. "Rack of Beef Ribs Marinated in Italian Vinaigrette w/ Avocado Oregano Relish, Roasted Pekong Peking Duck w/ Pancakes, Squid Parmiggiana w/ Bechamel-Marinara Sauce, Indonesian Chicken Satay, Singaporean Pork Satay, Barbecued Mahi-Mahi w/ Yellow Pepper-Cilantro Pesto. **P2,500**

June 7(Wednesday)9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.(classroom A) **BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison.** "Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing. **P1,500**

June 7(Wednesday)2:00 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A) **SPECIAL COURSE ON COOKIES by: Heny Sison.** "Chocolate Chip Cookies, Jam Thumbprint, Peanut Butter Cookies, Lemon Bars, Chocolate Cups, Oatmeal and Chocolate Crinkles. **P1,500**

June 7(Wednesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! BULAKAN SWEETS FAVORITE KAKANIN by: Chef Carol Acosta**, Food consultant to multinational food companies & restaurants "Ensaymada Malolos, Special Inipit, Yellow Puto, Pitchi-Pitchi, Kapit (Kalamay w/ Langka & Latik) and Special Macaroons. **P1,500**

June 10(Saturday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **THAI COOKING II by: Chef Dino Guingona. Recipes:** Kaeng Liang (Thai Hot Soup), Steamed Mussels with Sweet Basil, Phanang Nus (Beef Red Curry) and Po Pia Thot (Thai Spring rolls with crabmeat, chicken and vegetables). **P1,500**

June 13-14(Tuesday-Wednesday)9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **CAKE DECORATING COURSE II by: Heny Sison.** "Add amazing new skills to your cake decorating – the world of icing flowers, distinctive borders, flower spray & specialty flowers. As a final project you will decorate a basketweave cake filled with cascading flower. **Full participation. P4,000**

June 13(Tuesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B) **INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE COOKING by: Chef Koichi Kondo**, licensed cook from Ehime, Japan and food consultant to various Japanese restaurants. "Learn all-time favorites Japanese dishes applicable to home & professional cooking such as: Sushi, Sashimi, Sukiyaki, Miso Soup, Tempura, Teriyaki, Udon Noodles in Clay Pot, Chicken Teriyaki & Japanese Fried Rice. **P2,500**

June 14(Wednesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B) **KOREAN COOKING I: A WORKSHOP by: Chef Cecile Park**, owner of Sila Korean Restaurant & food consultant to various Korean restaurants in Metro Manila" Beef Bulgogi (Tenderloin & ordinary), Chicken Bulgogi, Pork Bulgogi, Chap Chae, Mi Yuk Guk (Soups: Seaweeds, Beef or Tahong), Bibimbap & Kalbi Jim. **P2,500**

June 15(Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **NUTS ABOUT DESSERTS by: Jackie Ang Po**, pastry Chef of Fleur de Lys Patisserie, dean's list graduate, California Culinary Academy" Honey Pistachio Baklava, Chocolate Macadamia Brittle, Gooey Pecan Pie, Cashew Boat Tarts with Meringue Topping, Almond Crunch Cookies, and Mini Peach Walnut Sansrival. **P1,500**

June 15(Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! JEEPNEY, BUS STOP AND CARINDERIA GOURMET FOOD PART 2 by Chef Sam de Leoz.**. Boost your earnings and attract more client by learning to prepare carinderia food the gourmet way and gain the edge over your competitors. All dishes come with special sauces." JCJ Crispy Fried Chicken, Ulo-Ulo sa Miso w/ Fumet- Miso Base, Inihaw na Pork Chop, Zesty Bopis in Red Wine Stew w/ Nachos, Goto Heaven, Buto-Buto, Chopsuey Canton **Demonstration w/ student participation. P2,000**

June 16(Friday)9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! FUNDAMENTALS OF SALAD PREPARATION & DRESSINGS by: Heny Sison** Bound Salads: Egg Salad, Potato Salad, Coleslaw, Chicken Salad & Ham Salad Compound Salads: Grilled Chicken Breast, Spinach Salad w/ Smoked Bacon Poached Shrimps, Smoked Honey Cured Quail w/Salad Greens w/ Dressing or Vinaigrette. **Dressings & Vinaigrettes:** Torani Raspberry Vinaigrette, Torani Mango Vinaigrette, Caesar Salad Dressing, Creamy Black-Pepper Dressing, Red Wine Vinaigrette, Balsamic Vinaigrette. **P1,700**

June 16(Friday)9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (classroom B) **DIMSUM II by: Chef Katherine Sion**" Steamed Pork Spareribs in Tausi Sauce, Chicken Siomai, Sharksfin Siomai, Two Colors Siomai, Wanton Mami and Egg Tart. **P1,700**

June 16(Friday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! EASY FAST-FOOD RECIPES 2 by: Chef Katherine Sion**"Fried Stuffed Shrimp, Crispy Pata, Sizzling Liid w/ Spicy Sauce, Maki Mi, Broccoli w/ Oyster Sauce, Steamed Chicken Rice. **P2,000**

June 17(Saturday)9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (classroom A) **HEALTHY GOURMET - SOUTH BEACH DIET PHASE 1 by: Jacqueline H. Alleje**, owner of Rizal Dairy Farm, Swiss-Pinoy restaurateur (Vieux Chalet Swiss restaurant), organic caterer and food consultant (Petra's naturally green, global, gourmet)" This class is suitable for all people who want to be able to cook healthy dishes, lose weight considerably and people with health concerns such as diabetes, high blood pressure and other dietary restrictions. The class will guide you through the principles of healthy nutrition. South Beach Diet phase 1 "Swiss Pinoy Style", which uses locally available ingredients. **Complete menu plan and recipes for 14 days of Phase 1. P1,500 plus P700 recipe booklet for Phase 1**

June 17(Saturday)1:00 – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **HEALTHY GOURMET – SOUTH BEACH DIET COMBO CLASS PHASE 2 and 3 by: Jacqueline H. Alleje.** "This class is suitable for all people who want to learn how to cook healthy dishes, deepen their knowledge of nutrition and weight control, as well as people with health concerns, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and other dietary restrictions. This class teaches wholesome recipes which reintroduce carbohydrates with complete recipe booklets for phase 2 and 3 of the South Beach Diet. **P1,500 plus P700 per recipe booklet.**

June 19(Monday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **BASIC FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS by: Glenn Remorca**, floral designer. "Learn the theories, styles, trends, techniques, sourcing, flower care and maintenance, basic forms, arrangements and flowers for weddings. **Lecture, demonstration and hands-on production. Bring a pair of scissors. P2,500**

June 19(Monday)9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (classroom B) **THE BEST OF THE BEST SERIES II by: Chef Vicki Villanueva**, from Stars & Bizu, let Chef Vicki share with you her wealth of knowledge and experience of patisseries and restaurant concepts, skills, techniques & operations." Learn the Chef's secret. More tips and proven techniques. **Recipes:** Softest Ensaymada, Savory Toppings, Adobo Flakes, Meat Floss, Sweet Toppings, Classic, Chocolate, Praline and Ube, Queso de Bola Cheese Rolls, Crisp Crusted Light Waffles, Full Proof Cinnamon Rolls, Coffee, Chocolate and Caramel Eclairs, Cream Puff and Bunuelos. **P2,650**

June 20(Tuesday)9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) **ARTISANAL BREAD by: Jacqueline Alleje.** "Nothing equals the satisfaction of home baked breads. In this class you will learn how to bake savory and sweet quick breads. This class is a must for all who wants to complete their skill of healthy cooking. This class will teach you how to prepare the most delicious healthy breads. And, if you want to turn it into a small business, we teach you how to. **Recipes:** Whole Wheat Sandwich Bread, Yogurt Graham, Herb-Onion-Bacon Bread, Yogurt Graham Bread, Bread Sticks, Focaccia, Whole Wheat Swiss Quark, Raisin Bread and Mango Tea Bread. **P2,500**

June 20(Tuesday)9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS! DIMSUM 3 by: Chef Katherine Sion.** "Cantonese Machang, Chinese Gyoza, Beef Siomai, Fried Special Lumpia, Labanos Cake and Snow White Mochi. **P2,200**

June 20(Tuesday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS! EASY FAST-FOOD RECIPES 3 by: Chef Katherine Sion.** " Lotson Macau, Meatballs w/ Sweet and Sour Sauce, Crabmeat Fuyong, Lomi Soup, Camaron Rebosado, Fried Rice w/ Assorted Meats. **P2,000**

June 21(Wednesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **SPECIAL TABLE AND HOME DECOR FLOWER ARRANGEMENT by: Glenn Remorca.** Table Centerpieces w/ actual demonstration and table setting presentation **Lecture, demonstration and hands-on production. Bring a pair of scissors. P3,000**

June 21(Wednesday)9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS! BEST OF THE BEST V: CHOCOLATE BARS by: Chef Vicki Villanueva.** "Triple Chocolate Fudgy Brownies, Cappuccino Bars, Turtle Squares, Zebra Bars, Butterscotch Bars and Revel Bars. **P1,700**

June 21(Wednesday)1:30 – 5:30 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! BEST OF THE BEST VI: FRUIT & NUTTY BARS by: Chef Vicki Villanueva.** "Lemon Squares, Prune and Walnut Bars, Food for the Gods, Apple Bars, Mango Bars and Guapple Bars. **P1,700**

June 22(Thursday)10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **EASY BAKING by: Chef Jacqueline Ang Po.** "Caramel Popcorn, Crinkles, Fudge Brownies, Chocolate Cookies, Cocoa Truffle and Pineapple Ice Box Cake. **P1,500**

June 22(Thursday)9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.(classroom B) **JAPANESE RICE TOPPING by: Chef Koichi Kondo. Recipes:** Oyako-don (Chicken & Egg on Rice), Gyudon (Beef Bowl), Tendon (Tempura Bowl), Katsudon (Pork Cutlet Bowl), Soboro-don (Minced Chicken & Egg Bowl), Tori Teriyaki-don (Chicken Teriyaki). **P1,700**

June 22(Thursday)1:30 – 5:30 p.m. (classroom B) **SUSHI CLASS by: Chef Koichi Kondo.** "Temaki-Zushi (Do-It Yourself Sushi Rolls), Bara-Zushi (Scattered Sushi), Inari-Zushi (Sushi Pockets), Futo-Maki Zushi (Thick-Rolled Sushi), Teka-Maki (Hand-rolled Tuna Sushi), Kappa-Maki (Sea Cucumber Sushi) and California Maki. **P1,700**

June 23(Friday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! RECIPES FOR SUCCESS IN FOOD CART BUSINESS III by: Chef Vicki Villanueva.** Bread Cart, Bakery's best sellers for 2006 "Health Breads, Whole Wheat Pandesal, Herb Foccacia, Ciabatta, Garlic Sticks, Sugar Free, No Fat Whole Wheat Loaf and Carrot Bread. Tips on Start ups, Food cost. **Demonstration with student participation. P2,500**

June 23(Friday)9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! RAINY DAYS AND MONDAYS SOUPS, STEWS, AND CASSEROLES by: Chef Sam de Leoz.** Say goodbye to those rainy days and Monday blues and say hello to 1-dish comfort foods." Creole Jambalaya, Hungarian Goulash, Batbacua, Ossobuco Alla Milanese w/ Mushroom Combo Risotto, Beef Pares and Sopa de Mansco **Demonstration w/ student participation. P2,500**

June 24(Saturday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **NEW CLASS! RESTAURANT KITCHEN DESIGN by: Raeanne Cranbourne**, graduated in 1998 from the Hotel School at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York with a BS degree in Hotel Management, concentrating in Hospitality Design **Topic Covered:** (1)Sizing – Proportion of kitchen to dining area (2)Equipment- Basic requirements for specific types of restaurants (3)Layout – Flow of goods from back door to customer (4)Construction material – for floors, walls, ceilings (5)Design Tips – how to build on a budget, common mistakes to avoid (6)Sizing Guide – what size of equipment to use (7)Storage and office space (8)Costing – construction costs and equipment costs (9)Supplier guide–list of contact information for local suppliers. **P2,000**

June 26(Monday)9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! BEST OF THE BEST VII: LOAF & CUPCAKES by: Chef Vicki Villanueva.** "Carrot Walnut Cake, Chocolate Financiers, Butter Cake, Devils Food Cake, Choco Banana Cake, Marble Pound Cake, Chocolate Frosting, Cream Choco, Vanilla Buttercream. **P1,700**

June 26(Monday)1:30 – 5:30 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! MY SECRET PASTA RECIPES I by: Chef Vicki Villanueva.** "Lasagna, Amatriciana, Arrabiatta Puttanesca, Vodka & Tomato, Vongole, Marinara, Salmon Cream Sauce, 3 Kinds of Mushroom Sauce and Pesto. **P1,700**

June 26(Monday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) **PAELLA Y MAS (Paellas & More!) by: Chef Ed Quimson**, is a seasoned master chef of Spanish origin, creator of Chef Ed's Restaurant at Salcedo Village, Makati City and his latest restaurant FILOS at The Fort, Makati City. He has also lent his expertise to such restaurants as La Tasca, Via Mare, The Nielsen Tower, the Member's Lounge of the Phil. Stock Exchange & the Subic Yacht Club" **Recipes:** Paella Negra (w/ squid ink), Paella ala Montaña, Paella Catalan (sin Tropezone), Paella Sevillana (Vegetarian), Paella Con Seta y Mejillones, Ensalada Especial & Pescado ala Sal. **Demonstration with student participation. P2,500**

June 27(Tuesday)9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) **SECRETS NO MORE! by: Heny Sison.** "Decadent Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing & Caramel Sauce, Lemon Torte, Ensaymada, Almond Sanzrival, Strawberry Shortcake & Ube Cake. **P3,000**

June 27(Tuesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! ADVANCED KOREAN COOKING CLASS by: Chef Cecile Park.** "Kimchi (Baguio Pechay & Raddish), Haemul Pajeon (Seafood Pancake with Several Vegetable), Samgye Tang (Ginseng Whole Chicken, Glutinous Rice & Ginseng), Teige Calbi Chim (Spareribs Stew), Bulgogi Salad (Beef Tenderloin Barbecue with Vegetables & Sauce), Tak Salad (Chicken Salad), Tak Don Tang (Spicy Chicken Stew) and Chap Chae (Contemporary Restaurant Style). **P2,500**

June 28(Wednesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! JAPANESE COOKING 3 by: Chef Koichi Kondo** **Recipes:** Yakisoba, Yaki-Udon, Tamagoyaki, Saikoro Steak, Ebi-Fry, Koroke, Kani Salad & Coffee Jelly. **P1,700**

June 28(Wednesday)9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! MODERN FRENCH COOKING by: Chef Dino Guingona** Gather 20 of your friends and enjoy a cooking party with Chef Dino Guingona. The fun begins as our in-house florist demonstrate how to do an elegant table setting. **Recipes will be given:** Salad of Mixed Green w/ homemade dressing, Chicken Liver Pate w/ Papadams, French Onion Soup w/ Four Cheeses, Fillet of Marinated Cream Dory w/ Roasted Capsicums, Rack of Lamb w/ Roasted Garlic Potatoes & Raspberry Souffle w/ Chocolate Sauce Watch & enjoy the food! Early reservation is required for this class. **P2,000**

June 29(Thursday)9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! TECHNIQUES OF FINE COOKING I (Featuring Chicken)by: Chef Vicki Villanueva.** Hands-on preparation and cooking of chicken. Each student shall be assigned whole chicken to butcher and debone. Learn how to grill, roast, stew, fry, sauté, steam and make sauces. **Recipes include:** Chicken Gallantina, Chicken Cordon Bleu, Chicken Sate, Classic Roasted Herb Chicken, Chicken Nuggets, Chicken Caesar Salad, Chicken Fricasse and Chicken Teriyaki. **Maximum of 15 students only! P2,650**

June 30(Friday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **PHILIPPINE SWEETS AND DELICACIES PART VIII by: Chef Carol Acosta.** "Tikoy, Ube Cassava Bibingka, Cassava Roll w/ Peanuts, Torta Española, Inipit w/ Macapuno, Lumpia w/ Creamy Sauce. **P1,500**

We are now accepting enrollees for the June batch of **ESSENTIAL COOKING SERIES** (June 29 – September 7, 2006. Classes are held every Thursdays & Fridays). **ESSENTIAL BAKING AND PASTRY SERIES** (June 3 – December 2, 2006. Classes are held every Saturdays)

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Lucbanin food fest

DINING OUT

CENTURY PARK HOTEL presents the "Lucbanin Food Festival" until May 28. For only P850+ for adults and P500+ for kids, diners can have the lunch or dinner "Tayo na sa Handaan" buffet at Café in the Park that features traditional Lucbanin specialties. Call 5288888.

TANG CITY has an extensive menu of almost 200 dishes. Among the bestsellers are Roast Duck, crabs cooked in 12 different ways, and exotic dishes like Siao Long Pao, Tong Po Pork, Fried Layered Pao, 8 Glutinous Rice and other traditional dim sum and noodle specialties. Special rice toppings include Honey Roast Asado Rice, Soy Chicken Rice, and Lechon Macau Rice. Call 8161340 (Glorietta) or 5231919 (Robinson's Ermita).

MANDARIN ORIENTAL celebrates French Spring in Manila with "Journees Gastronomiques III" at The Tivoli, June 1-11. Guest chef de cuisine Franck Gialbert and chef de partie Nicolas Bonvarlit will take gourmands on a pleasurable gastronomic journey. Call 7508888 local 2431/2432.

MANILA PAVILION features Sacher Torte especially for chocoholics. Available until May 31, the cake costs P850+ (whole) and P85+ (slice). The hotel's Boulvar goes Mexican with tacos special this month. Four tacos with beef or chicken, grated cheese, spicy salsa, sour cream and fresh iceberg lettuce are available for P220+ until May 31. Patisserie offers this month "Nuts About Donuts" in such flavors as Mocha Cream, Chocolate Melt with Honey Glaze, Strawberry Aphrodisiac, Butterscotch Craze, Black Forest and White Choco. Call 5261212 local 2317.

SACHER Torte

CASCADA launched recently Powerlunch dishes including Garlic-Butter Prawns in Allgue Coconut Cream Sauce on Herb Pasta with Eggplant Tempura, Pork Sisig and Quail Egg Napoleon on Wonton Crisp. Cascada is at the 2/L of Greenbelt 3.

THE BELLEVUE HOTEL'S Poolside offers Barbecue Dinner Buffet Friday and Saturday, and Burger Lunch Binge Friday-Sunday. For al fresco dining at the poolside, guests can choose from salads, seafood kebabs, salmon, chicken barbecues, minute steak, Hungarian sausage, veal bratwurst, desserts and more. Burger lovers can have a pick of quarter pounder, chicken and egg, cream dory and Hungarian hotdog burgers. The barbecue is priced at P795+. Guests who are checking in get a 20-percent discount. Call 7718181.

MAX BRENNER offers the first and only puff pastry pizza in the country. The new Max Brenner pizza comes in five flavors: "Under the Sea" for seafood lovers, "Big Fat Greek" for Mediterranean food fans, Cinque Formaggi for cheese lovers, Arugula and Garlic for vegetarians, and Quattro Staggioni for those who want to try all four. Other flavors available are Pepperoni and Meat Lover's Pizza. The pizzas can be enjoyed with Max Brenner's Choclshakes. Max Brenner is at the G/F, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati. Call 7288801.

THE SULO HOTEL'S Sushi Bar and Teppanyaki's Dish of the Month is the Tuna Teppanyaki, tuna sauteed in butter and garlic and sprinkled with bean sprouts and veggies, served with rice and miso soup. The dish is available until May 28. Call 9245051.

ZHONGNANHAI CHINESE BISTRO at Greenbelt 2 offers special no-meat dishes: the ZNH Seafood Rice and Noodle Toppings and the ZNH Seafood Specials (a la carte). Call 7581111 or 4593663.

OUTBACK RESTAURANT offers new items: the Queensland Cobb Salad, chicken salad on fresh greens with Monterey Jack and Cheddar cheese, smoked ham, chopped egg and diced tomato; Spinach Artichoke Dip and Chips; Darling Point Crab Cakes; and Victoria's Crowned Filet. Outback Restaurant branches are in Libis, Alabang Town Center and Glorietta 4.

How-tos when wining and dining

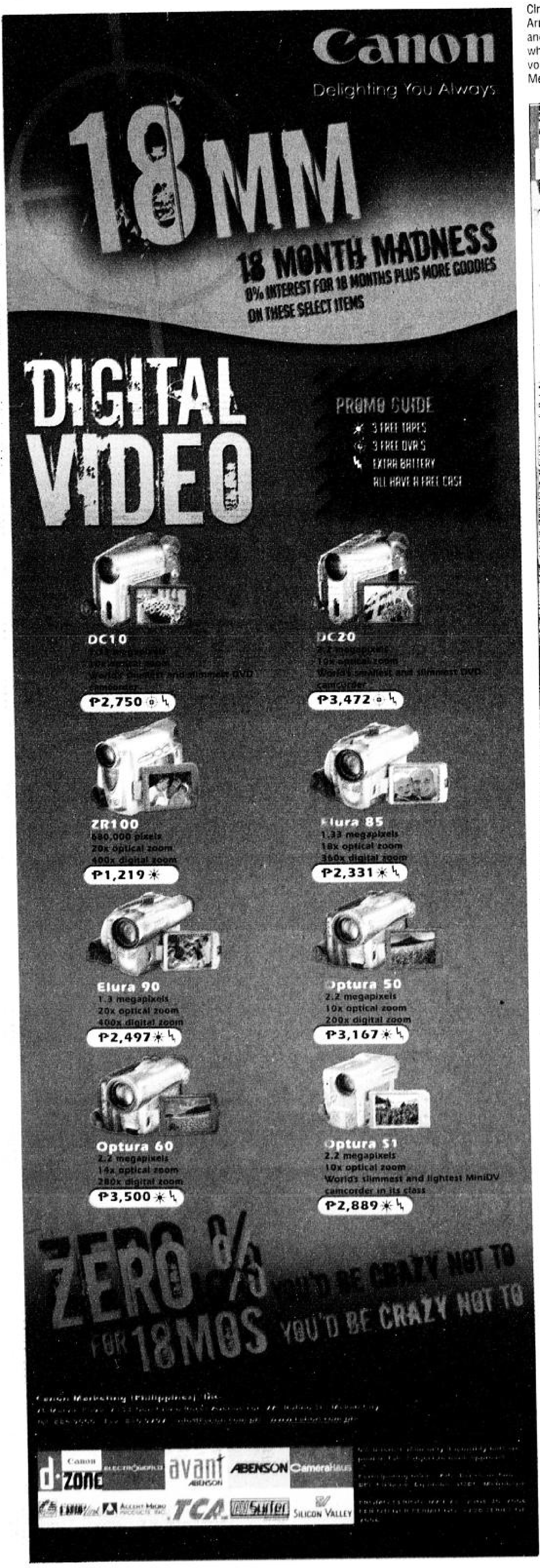
CHATEAU 1771 Group of Restaurants, with the Ateneo de Manila University Center for Continuing Education, will conduct a course on "Wine Appreciation and Dining Out for Executives" May 26-27 at the Ateneo Professional Schools Building, HV Dela Costa St., Makati City.

The 1½-day course will be conducted by chef Vicky Rose Pacheco of Chateau 1771 Group of Restaurants. It will focus on basic wine knowledge, wine tasting how-tos and tips, handling wine, and dining etiquette.

Call 8302050 or visit www.cce.ateneo.edu or call 6321435/6320008.

For reservations, call 6317340-41; for catering, call 631-7339.

Chateau 1771 El Pueblo is at El Pueblo Real de Manila, ADB Avenue cor. Julia Vargas Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City.



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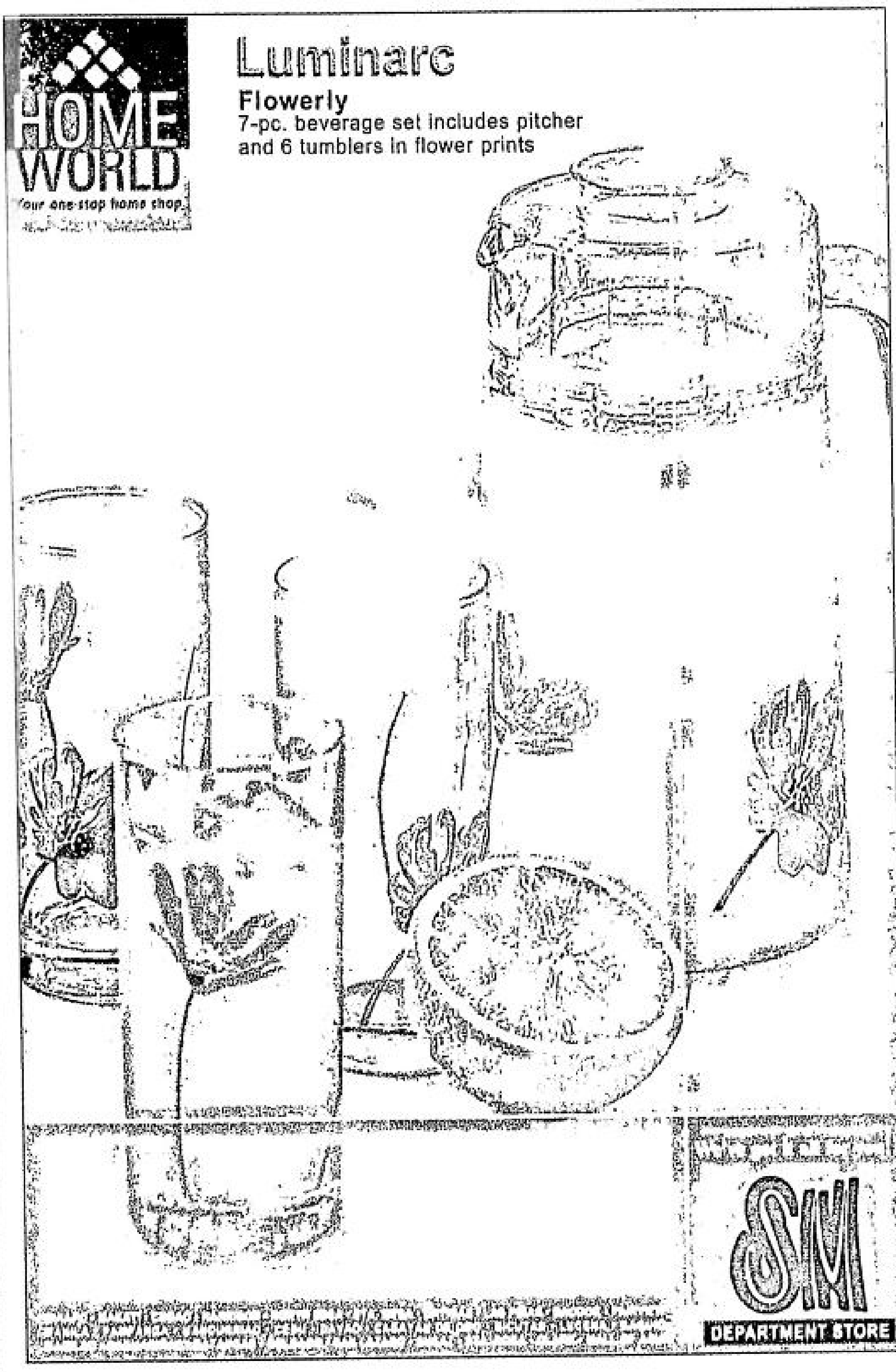

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